アロハ座長
イラスト＋ゆきさん
Only Sense Online
オンリーセンス・オンライン
09
ファンタジア文庫

Only Sense Online
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09

「冬服も白銀装備！」
ミュウ Myu
片手剣と白魔法を使いこなす聖騎士。
冬服装備は、お金にものを言わせて、マギに作ってもらった。とにかく、白銀のものには目がない

光の粒子が雪に姿を変え、
町全体に粉雪が舞い降りてくる――
「ん？ どうしたのザクロ」
「雪に反応してるんじゃないですか」
マギ Magi
トップ生産職の一人で、武器職人。
未完成の冬服装備を完成させるため、
ユンやクロードたちと素材収集に励む
ユン Yun
【アトリエール】を経営する生産職
プレイヤー 冬の大規模イベントでは、
隠しクエストを次々と発見することに

「いい加減負けるのは！腹が立つのよ!!」
《大車輪》!!
ライナ Lyna
ギルド【新緑の風】に所属する新人プレイヤー。
双子の弟・アルとタッグを組む、短槍使い。
冬の大規模イベントでは、ユンと一緒に
複数のクエストに挑み、成長を見せていく

Only Sense Online

Volume 9

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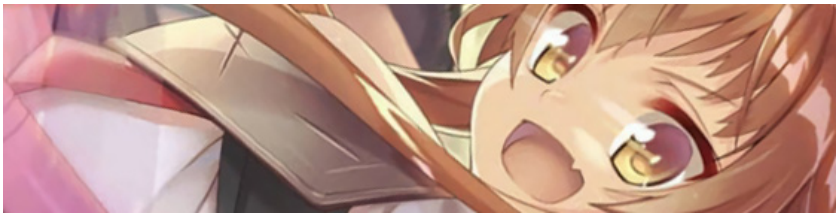
Illustrated by Yukisan



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Prologue

The Update and Adult Form

"Fufufu! It's here! It's here, here heree! It's come! Onii-chan!"

"What is it? C'mon, let's go do shopping."

The November temperature suddenly dropped low as we entered December and we could feel the winter's arrival.

Although in the region our town was in there was no snow, it was so cold that we felt like wearing coats.

"Christmas is soon! I'm starting to enter a merry mood!"

"You're right. When I think that that busy time is coming my mood plummets."

"There's Christmas, end of the year and the New Year! The end of the year is when

the shopping season begins! There's no way one can stay in bad mood while there's a release rush of new games!"

My little sister's, Miu's eyes shone brilliantly as she spoke with emphasis.

"No, we're not buying several games, I mean, do you even have time to play them?"

"I'll squeeze out some! I'll play diligently whenever I have a little of time, y'know. Ah, can I go get a flyer from the game shop? I want to talk about it with Onee-chan and Taku-san later."

"I don't mind, but be right back."

As we passed in front of a game shop Miu dashed over to get a flyer.

"Good grief. Our goal today is something else though."

I heaved a sigh as I waited for Miu to

come back.

While waiting I dropped my sight at the shopping list I held.

On the memo there were the Christmas cake and hors' d`oeuvre, as well about pre-ordering New Year's dishes.

"Uhh, so cold. Let's finish shopping quickly and go back home."

Miu has come with me since she wanted to pick the Christmas cake, but if I knew she would make a detour like this I would just ask her what type does she want and have come alone, I thought with regret.

After I waited for a while under the cold weather, Miu had come back rejoicing with a mobile in her hand.

"Onii-chan! There's an event! Event is coming!"

"Is that something still relevant if said by

a Japanese, surrounded by events all year round?"

'Oh c'mon! There's an announcement of OSO's official event! Look!"

"Ohh, is that so."

I thought she meant there's an event ongoing in one of the surrounding Christmas-coloured shops, but it was about OSO's event.

"The content of the event is a time-limited Quest Event it says! There's supposed to be an update by the end of the year centred around environment damage, they are implementing 【Cold Damage】 and fixing the 【Heat Damage】 as well as changing some details! I so look forward to it, I can't wait!"

Miu must have been really excited about it as she pulled the end of my muffler, desperately trying to convey just how excited she was.

The passer-bys looked at Miu with smiles, but since I was embarrassed I held down her head to stop her.

"Calm down. Still, to come up with an event during such a busy time the end of the year is..."

Does OSO's management intend to die from overwork? I thought, and suddenly the face of the man who was called OSO's development department director crossed my head.

"Oh Onii-chan, you're acting all dry! Enjoy yourself more!"

"Ahh, yes yes. Right. Miu, is there anything you want?"

"Eh? Let's seee, we could buy some Japanese sweets like broiled sweet chestnuts. Then I'll chill out under the kotatsu drinking some bitter tea."

Since the Christmas season has come I thought she'd request some sweets matching that, but her surprising choice wasn't too bad either.

"Still, they're doing an event during the Christmas season and then an event by the end of the year?"

I looked at the smartphone's screen shown to me by Miu and confirmed the event's date.

The event that starts in half a month ends around the Christmas season, and a week from then there's the end of year update.

And, there was one more reason Miu was in so high spirits.

"I look forward to it. There's the Christmas event, but Shizuka-oneechan is also coming back for Christmas!"

"Before that, we're entering winter break so do your homework properly."

"Hwah! Don't tell me such hateful thiings!"

We enter the winter break before Christmas comes, but I had to stab a nail into Miu who seemed too wound up with Christmas and New Year's.

Shizuka-nee is coming back for the year's end and the New Year so I want her to rest leisurely.

In the meantime, Miu and I arrived in front of a cake shop decorated for Christmas and entered it.

"Now, we've arrived at the cake shop, which one do you want to eat?'

"Hmm. I narrowed them down to three candidates in advance, how about buying them all——"No. Give up."——riiight∽."

After saying so, Miu started choosing seriously one of the three candidate cakes, a Strawberry Cake, Bûche de Noël and a Fruit Roll Cake.

The price for the three cakes was roughly the same, I smiled wryly to the clerk as Miu furrowed the eyebrows on her cute face.

"All right! I decided! Let's reserve a Bûche de Noël."

"You're sure of that, right."

What Miu choose was Bûche de Noël, a cake covered with chocolate and powdered sugar.

"The strawberry cake can be eaten in any season, but if we're picking one it's best to pick one fitting Christmas season. Ah, but I did look forward to the fruits roll cake since it's different during every season."

As Miu said that, I placed an order with

the clerk before she could change her mind.

Miu looked at the other cakes with reluctance and said "let's quickly go home" but our shopping wasn't over yet.

"C'mon, we still have to buy the appetizers and reserve New Year's dishes."

"Ohhh! That's right!"

For a moment she showed a displeased expression as I stopped her, but when she recalled we still had things to do, her bright expression returned.

For the remaining things such as the appetizers and New Year's dishes there was no need to choose like for the cake since we bought the same thing every year, but the shopping still seemed quite fun.

As we made our orders one by one, by the time we have finished shopping Miu's

attention has completely moved towards OSO.

"We're baack⁓. And let's check what OSO's maintenance changed!"

Miu rushed straight back to her room and logged into OSO.

"Good grief. The event still haven't started, there's no meaning in rushing so much."

With that said, after I put away the ingredients we bought into the refrigerator, my thinking also was directed towards the winter event.

"What should I do about my Senses now..."

I was anguishing lightly over what Senses should I improve during the short period the event is going on for.

Among the crafting-based Senses I had

two that either grew or had a derivation.

If I concentrated on combat-type Senses I could derive or grow the【Bow】and【Earth Element Talent】Senses.

However, I didn't have enough time to raise them both.

Do I take combat Senses or crafting Senses?

"Well, there's no need for me to hurry and take them, let's do it as usual."

It's not like it wasn't possible for me to cooperate with Miu and Takumi to get some unreasonable high-density high-speed leveling.

But unlike Miu, I preferred enjoying myself at my own pace.

And so, there was no need to think about the Sense build too deeply, I felt.

"...speaking of which, Miu. She wanted to eat a Strawberry Cake and Fruits Roll Cake."

Once we finished buying everything and put it away, I recalled what happened in the cake shop.

"...well, Christmas is near, might as well level my【Cook】Sense."

In the end, I decided to level【Cook】that was a crafting Sense.

I went back to my room as well, put on the VR Gear that was placed on the desk and lied down on the bed.

I left myself to the feeling of sinking into the darkness as I logged into OSO.

●

"Phew, arrived. Heck, it's cold!"

Once I logged in, at the same time I landed in the【Atelier】I shivered of cold.

I opened the menu and looked for the cause of the chill inside the workshop and saw an announcement of a small update that has been made.

In preparation for the implementation of cold damage it seemed that they have implemented varying temperature during four seasons, each area having temperature adjusted individually.

"It's no time to talk about cakes. I need a countermeasure against cold damage. Also, my equipment was made during the summer so it feels quite cold."

My Ochre Creator armour hadn't sleeves and had shorts so it felt quite cold.

"Uhh, it's seriously cold. I wonder if I

have any items I can urgently use to deal with it."

I immediately started looking for items inside the【Atelier】I could use and after a while, I found something I could use.

"Let's warm up with this for now."

What I took out while saying that was the【Oven Stove】I acquired during the summer's camp event.

Using it I could bake a Christmas cake or a roasted chicken, but what was more useful to me now was the stove feature rather than the oven one.

I carried it out to the store part of the【Atelier】and after placing it next to the counter I turned on the fire.

"Since the stove is already installed and working, let's boil some water for tea later. I wonder if there's anything else I could use."

I carried a kettle filled with water and placed it on the installed 【Oven Stove】 and started looking for something else I could use as a countermeasure against cold.

Ahead of where I turned to, there was a deformed red gel-like object lying beneath my tamed mob, black fox's young best.

Although I smiled seeing Zakuro sleep on top of the Heat Gel he used as a countermeasure for cold, I shook from cold and prepared myself to craft.

"Let's make some synthetic mobs for the first time in a while."

Among the synthetic mobs that could be crafted with the 【Synthesis】 Sense, there was a Heat Gel that could be used like a hot water bottle.

I took out the Blue Jelly that was the base material and prepared materials of four elements, fire, water, wind and earth.

I put them on top of the synthetic circle and did a synthesis of five items, crafting an item called 【Slime Nucleus】 that allowed summoning of a slime.

Furthermore, in order to make the synthetic mob I wanted I synthesized it with fire element material and a 【Blue Gelatin】. And like that, I was able to craft a nucleus stone of the Heat Gel like the one I already had in the 【Atelier】.

"All right, it's been a while since I made it, but there's no problem. —— 《Summon》!"

The summoned Heat Gel was a red translucent slime. It had a higher elasticity compared to a normal slime, at the same time it had perfect stiffness to act as a cushion and was warm because it held the fire element.

I immediately tried touching it and felt warmth spreading in my palm.

"Hmm, one is only enough to feel a little warm. What if I put it beneath my feet?"

I put the gel on the floor under the counter, took off my boots and placed my feet on it.

There was warmth and soft elasticity that pushed my feet back upwards.

As a cold countermeasure I should prepare two of those, I thought.

"As for other things I can use... I can put the【Large Fur】I made by synthesizing Wild Dog's Fur on my knees."

After I prepared some cold countermeasures and placed them on top of the table, it had turned into an unreasonable mess.

"Hmm. Since【Cold Damage】is being implemented, it would be nice if there was an item among recipes that could protect

me from it. Also, I need to confirm my Sense status."

I opened the menu and checked my status levels and the Senses that have satisfied conditions for growth.

Possessed SP53

【Sky Eyes Lv12】
【Swiftness Lv16】
【See-Through Lv20】
【Sorcery Lv15】
【Enchant Arts Lv37】
【Earth Element Talent Lv28】
【Dosing Lv50】
【Alchemy Lv43】
【Synthesis Lv43】
【Crafting Knowledge Lv50】

Unequipped:

【Bow Lv48】

【Longbow Lv27】
【Taming Lv17】
【Engraving Lv25】
【Cook Lv11】
【Swimming Lv15】
【Linguistics Lv24】
【Climbing Lv21】
【Bodily Resistance Lv3】
【Spiritual Resistance Lv1】

Information:

● NEW:【Dosing】 has reached level 50.
A higher sense has been unlocked.

● NEW:【Crafting Knowledge】 has reached level 50.
A higher sense has been unlocked.

"Hmm. Maybe if I have【Dosing】grow into a higher Sense I'll be able to make a potion to counter the cold."

I consumed 6SP in order to acquire【Dosing】and【Crafting Knowledge】's higher Senses.

Possessed SP47

【Sky Eyes Lv12】
【Swiftness Lv16】
【See-Through Lv20】
【Sorcery Lv15】
【Enchant Arts Lv37】
【Earth Element Talent Lv28】
【Dosing Master Lv1】
【Alchemy Lv43】
【Synthesis Lv43】
【Crafter's Knowledge Lv1】

Unequipped:

【Bow Lv48】
【Longbow Lv27】
【Taming Lv17】
【Engraving Lv25】
【Cook Lv11】
【Swimming Lv15】
【Linguistics Lv24】
【Climbing Lv21】
【Bodily Resistance Lv3】
【Spiritual Resistance Lv1】

I checked both Senses, but there were no big changes.

There probably was an increase in stats with the level up, but the benefits won't be visible right after acquiring the Sense.

"Hmm. There's no new skills or anything. Are there some conditions for it?"

I examined the list of available skills but not finding any change I quietly closed the

menu.

"Well, even if the higher Sense has higher stat increase rate at level 1 it'll temporarily have the stats and skill correction lowered. Let's make some potions carefully until【Dosing Master】Sense reaches at least level 5."

I sighed quietly and first, in order to raise【Crafter's Knowledge Lv1】's level I continued making synthetic【Heat Gel's Nucleus Stone】one after another by using Synthesis.

After I completed 20 of them without failing, I confirmed【Crafter's Knowledge】rose up to level 2.

Afterwards I reviewed the number of remaining materials, then seeing as fire elemental materials are low on stock I decided to stop crafting for the time being and take some rest.

That's when the water in the kettle put on the stove started boiling so I prepared tea and opened the【Atelier】's entrance. Cold wind blew in causing me involuntarily shiver.

Outside, there was the woodworker Lyly.

"Hello, Yuncchi! It's so cooolddd!"

"Welcome, Lyly. I was just about to prepare tea, wait just a moment."

"Woaa, it's so warm in the shop!"

As I greet him, Lyly walked towards in front of the【Oven Stove】beside the counter.

"It must be really cold in those clothes."

"Same to you, Yuncchi, you've got a fur placed on top of the counter. In middle of preparations for cold countermeasures?"

Lyly asked me that and together with his

partner on his shoulder, the immortal bird Neshias they warmed themselves up by the【Oven Stove】.

"Well, you're right. With that said, I just started it."

When I passed freshly brewed black tea to Lyly he took the cup with both hands and slowly drank it while warming up his hands slowly with the heat.

"Phew, I calmed down. Thank you, Yuncchi."

"You're welcome. So, what do you need today?"

"Oh right! Yuncchi, listen to this! Shiacchi grew big!"

"Hee? Big?"

I looked at Neshias who's also called Shiacchi and tilted my head in wonder.

The phoenix riding on Lyly's shoulder didn't look like it, told that the fluffy gold and vermilion bird grew big I arrived at one possibility.

"Can it be he's become adult?"

"Exactly! Today when I logged in the【Taming】Sense had an EX-Skills called【Adult Form】and【Young Beast Form】added! That's why I came to show it to you, Yuncchi."

"Hee, I look forward to seeing it then."

Probably because they heard what Lyly and I talked about, Ryui who was lying on the stone pavement and Zakuro have got up and come beside us. The Heat Gels remaining on the ground after synthesis have crawled on the ground in order to go back to the pot where other gels were.

"Ryuicchi and Zakurocchi are curious as well, right! Well then, let's unveil it!

Shiacchi——【Adult Form】!"

As Lyly cast the EX-Skill【Adult Form】Neshias riding on his shoulder flew off and burst into flames fiercely in mid-air.

"Burning?! He's burning!"

"It's all right, look."

The phoenix young beast wrapped in flames scattered sparks, his shadow inside the flames grew.

And at the same time the shadow stopped growing within the flames they started to subside gradually and a beautiful phoenix had appeared.

His figure scattering particles reminiscent of sparks was much more beautiful than when he was a young beast.

And, the first impression that came out of my mouth was——

"So waarm. We'll be receiving【Cold Damage】 from now on so the timing's perfect."

"Yuncchi, thanks for giving me the same impression as everyone else!"

Apparently I wasn't the first one to see Neshias' unveiling and that everyone else had the same impression.

"By everyone you mean who?"

"Kurocchi and Magicchi. Both said he's warm and perfect for the coming season."

"Everyone's thinking the same thing, are they."

I drank the tea I brewed and muttered earnestly.

Were it Myu or Taku, they'd go "Strange! If it grew you have to make it fight!" making me retort, but personally, I thought the ability to keep others warm is nice.

Young beasts aren't just for combat, they're also useful for other things, is what I thought. In that respect it seemed like we could hold expectations for non-battle activities of Lyly's Neshias.

"Well then, that's it for unveiling! Shiacchi, go back to normal——【Young Beast Form】!"

When Lyly activated the Ex-Skill【Young Beast Form】flames sprouted from Neshias, his body had grown smaller returning back to original young beast appearance.

"That's great for you, Lyly."

"Yup! Kurocchi's Socks also turned adult! I look forward to see how your and Magicchi's young beasts grow, Yuncchi."

While saying so, Lyly lowered himself to his knees and pat Ryui and Zakuro who nestled up against me.

After I watched Lyly and the young beasts for a while, a call from Cloude had come through friend chat.

『"Yun. Lyly is in there, right."』

"Yeah he is, what happened?"

『"I wanted to call you over, but Lyly has rushed out first. There was a possibility you weren't in the store y'know. Sorry but recover him and come over."』

"Got it. Since you're calling me, do you need something?"

『"Yeah, together with Magi we decided to round up a provisional crafters' tea party. Sorry, but hurry up."』

"Roger that. We'll head there right away."

I turned off the friend call after a quick exchange with Cloude and called Lyly and the young beasts who were still playing together.

"Cloude says you're to come back. I'll be going with you as well."

"Ah! Right! I forgot about Kurocchi and Magicchi!"

He must have been really happy about Neshias adult form, seeing him act happy I smiled wryly.

"Wait a moment, I'll just put away the things from the counter."

I gathered all the items from on the top of the counter and put them in my inventory, then left the【Atelier】together with Lyly.

"Uhh, outside is so cold."

"Since it's cold, let's run and get to where Kurocchi and Magicchi are!"

"You're right.《Enchant》——Speed!"

I applied enchant increasing speed on

Lyly and myself, then bringing Ryui and other young beasts we ran over to the【Commonest Café & Clothier】 Cloude and Magi-san were waiting in.

Chapter 1
Winter Clothes and Cold Damage

"Hello."

"I'm back∽."

Once we ran over together with Lyly to【Commonest Café & Clothier】and entered it, I could smell the aroma of coffee and black tea inside and there were male and female players wearing serving clothes who have greeted us.

"Welcome, and welcome back. I was surprised when you have suddenly dashed out of here, Lyly-kun."

"I'm sorry."

"Calian, leave it at that. Cloude-san and others are waiting."

The female player who came to greet us

wearing a classically-coloured maid uniform matching the shop's atmosphere was Calian-san.

And, the young man wearing a waiter's clothing of a matching shade with hers who also rebuked her was Ratem-san.

The two were working in the café part of【Commonest Café & Clothier】, and were somewhat unique players.

Both of them started OSO to try running a café, and were neither combat-players nor crafters. Other than them, there was also Fior-san, a female player who hopes to become a patissière and worked behind the scenes in the café.

I'm quite acquainted with Calian-san and Ratem-san from when I occasionally come to the store.

Their clothes today were different from before, they had long sleeves and skirt, it

seemed like they wore those to protect themselves from the cold air.

"I see your clothes changed today."

"It's cause we felt cold when we logged in today. And then we quickly went to take out winter uniforms Cloude-san made before. I thought that he's just pointlessly increasing the number of cosplay outfits, but I'm grateful for that just this once."

While saying so, Calian-san stroked the arm wrapped in a long sleeve and muttered "it's so nice and warm".

Then, the place Lyly and I were guided to by her was the room we usually held a tea party in.

When we arrived in it, we saw the tailor Cloude and blacksmith Magi-san, who were crafters just like us.

Cloude elegantly drank coffee and Magi-

san seemed cold as she rubbed her thigh while she drank tea.

"Sorry to call you out, Yun."

"Yu-Yun-kun, hello."

"Hello, heck, Magi-san you're really pale!"

Magi-san who shivered likely out of cold had the most revealing clothes out of us all, so it was no wonder the cold had gotten to her.

Even drinking something warm and holding Cloude's tamed mob, Socks the Lucky Cat, she was unable to mitigate the cold.

Heck, because she was embracing adult Socks, her breasts looked even larger than usual.

"I guess I should say congratulations on your Socks' Adult Form."

"Thank you. He turned adult just like Lyly's Neshias, but since he was a support-type tamed mob in the first place, there wasn't much of a change."

After saying so he interrupted to moisten his throat with tea and spoke to Magi.

"Now then, it must be harsh to stay in that equipment isn't it, Magi. I prepared new equipment, how about you try it? Also, give Socks back to me."

"Considering it's your choice of clothes I bet it's some cosplay, so I don't want to."

Magi-san answered in a feeble voice and hugged Socks strongly as to her emphasize on her refusal.

"Wait a moment, Magi-san."

I summoned the synthetic Heat Gel from the 【Heat Gel's Nucleus Stone】 I have made for countering the cold.

When I passed it to her, Magi-san hugged it strongly against her belly.

Then for another thing, I took out the【Element Cream】that temporarily granted water element resistance and smeared it on Magi-san's arm.

"Ohh?! It feels like the cold is getting weaker. Thanks, Yun-kun."

It seemed like it had an effect that Magi-san could immediately feel.

Smiling broadly she released Socks and thanked me.

Previously when I have worked on blacksmithing work together with Magi-san and when I went to the volcanic area I received【Heat Damage】and now, I recalled at that time I could ease the effect by increasing fire resistance.

Applying that this time I was able to

decrease the amount of【Cold Damage】Magi-san receives by increasing her resistance to water element.

"Magi-san, even if this is a game, a woman shouldn't allow her body to get too cold."

"Umm, but putting on Cloude's weird clothes is a little..."

"What 'weird clothes'!"

"Magi-san..."

I lowered my tone of voice as I called her name. With just that, Magi-san faltered.

"I mean, cosplaying all alone is embarrassing."

"Then I'll change together with you. C'mon, let's wear something warmer."

When I said that gently to Magi-san, Cloude stood up flapping his cloak.

"Well said! Now, since you two have decided I'll gift you the finest warmth and cuteness!"

He said and taking out clothes from inventory he protruded them in front of us.

"G-got it."

"Kukuku, did you forget who made your armour? The armour bearing the name of CS was made with assumption of a variety of situations and is available in multiple patterns and designs. These are the winter clothes versions!"

Magi-san and I took the equipment in our hands and checked it up.

The black innerwear had covered the body up to the neck, a white outerwear coat had extended up to my knees in the back and shortened obliquely towards the front. When looked from the front it

looked kind of like a miniskirt.

Furthermore, on the coat's hood there was a black fluffy part that looked very warm.

Other than that, there were knee-high socks in order not to expose bare feet to the cold if possible, and for protecting the hands there were wool gloves with an archer thimble. All of this made the winter version of the Ochre Creator.

Magi-san's equipment was a combination of a leather jumpsuit and a leather jacket made from snake leather. The hard leather emphasizing her chest and the leather gloves made it seem like a rider suit.

Lyly's clothes didn't have a particularly big change, he wore a woolen hat, gloves, as well as white tights.

"This is so well-made it makes me feel stupid for acting stubborn, how

frustrating."

"Woah, it's fluffy and waarm."

"Somehow my equipment looks like it has a skirt. Also, why high-knee socks? Why not just pants?"

As we said that and immediately checked the armour in our hands Cloude had informed us of one more fact.

"Ah, and let me say this, this equipment aside from Lyly's is insufficient to protect you against cold."

"Then why the hell are you passing it to us!"

"I have made the designs alone quite a while ago, but I don't have enough materials for making equipment protecting from cold."

"So, why are you making us wear unfinished armour?"

Magi's question was natural, Lyly and I nodded in agreement.

Responding, Cloude had indifferently explained it.

"Actually the reason I called you guys this time is in order to complete these armours made as countermeasures against【Cold Damage】."

There, Cloude fell silent for a moment.

"Normally I would slowly gather the materials to make it, but the update's date was decided already and we need to hurry. That's why I'll have you guys gather materials."

"Hmm. Well, I understand. So, what are we supposed to gather?"

"It's written down on this list."

Once we looked at the note Cloude took out, saw the materials and locations they

are collected we all furrowed our eyebrows.

"These collection areas wonderfully scattered all over. I have some of these items so I'll have Kyouko-san bring them later."

"Yup. I think I had several types of these at my place so I'll provide them the same way."

"At my place I have only one item type of these. The leather I just bought to use for reinforcement of armour."

After we excluded the materials we had in stock from the list, in the end just two materials were missing.

"Well then, let's split the collection fo those materials between us four."

The two materials remaining on paper were 【Silky Spider's Thread】 and 【Cloud Fluff】.

"The place you can gather these are..."

I recalled the places they could be collected in.

The first material, 【Silky Spider's Thread】 was a normal drop from the Arachne boss mob that appeared in the Mine Dungeon. To complete Magi-san's armour we needed twelve of them.

And the【Cloud Fluff】was an item that drops from a normal enemy mob that appears in the back of the forest near the Second Town, in order to enter that area it was neccessary to fight a boss guarding the passage at least once.

In the end, to collect either materials there was no choice but to fight with a boss.

"I'll go get the【Silky Spider's Thread】. Since it's a mine, I can mine some ore as I pass by. I also wanted to beat some Archeni and Arachne in order to go to the Volcano

Area.

"By all means I want to see the【Fire-Rat's Leather Robe】in the Volcano Area dungeon's lottery stall so just like Magi, I'd like to go get【Silky Spider's Thread】."

If Magi-san and Cloude are going to the Mine Dungeon, it means Lyly and I will be going to collect the remaining【Cloud Fluff】.

"No objection here. It's a good opportunity to go to a new forest area and I want to see what wood materials are there."

"No problem here either."

With this the split for collecting materials has been decided, as a finishing touch Cloude had raised his voice.

"Well then, put on the winter clothes I gave you."

"Put on you say, but aren't these

unfinished?"

"The protection against cold is insufficient, but it's still warmer than what you have equipped. If you do your activities in those clothes you'll worry less about the cold than you do now. Also, lend me the armour you're wearing now for a moment."

Told so, we passed our current armours to Cloude who subjected them to emergency process for improving protection against cold then returned them.

"Once you're done changing I'll explain the winter clothes' new function."

Magi-san and I received our winter clothes and went to the locker room in the back of the store to change.

I tried on my Ochre Creator.

Since I had exposed arms and legs until now, once I wore the winter clothes, I felt warmth of the innerwear and knee-high socks wrapping tightly around my skin. At the same time I felt attentiveness from how

there was a place on the belt of the long coat where I could put in potions securely.

"Certainly this is great equipment, but the long coat looks like a skirt. It's warm, but I'm really bothered by the knee-high socks."

I stroked my chest and my arm over the innerwear with my right hand, and with my left I pressed down the mini-skirtish coat so that it doesn't roll up.

Even if I was wearing hot pants inside the coat, what bothers you, bothers you.

"That's how the design is. By likening the hem of the coat to a skirt it emphasizes the *zettai ryōiki* between the skirt and the knee-high socks."

"I have no need for such concept!"

Following my voice of protest Magi-san had also come out from the dressing room

once she finished changing her clothes. As expected, it looked like a rider suit. Although it was unfinished and lacking in details and decorations, the suit had fit very tightly and emphasized her chest making me unable to focus my gaze.

"You're cute, Yun-kun."

"Uuu, rather than cute I want to be called cool."

While averting my gaze from Magi-san, I sighed lightly.

Lyly had changed clothes ahead of time and seemed to have been waiting for as he had sweets with tea.

"Now, I'll explain the new function. With that said, there isn't much to say. It's just【Equipment Consolidation】."

"【Equipment Consolidation】?"

When hearing the unfamiliar term I

tilted my head in puzzlement, Cloude explained.

"The 【Equipment Consolidation】 is a setting where two or more equipments can share the same additional effects. Well, it could be said it's a function allowing you to change just your appearance and retain the same reinforcement material effects."

Because of its nature, the unique equipment and drop equipment cannot be used with 【Equipment Consolidation】 and it was limited to player-made items.

That function was mainly a short-cut allowing switching of equipments and the benefit from it was that you didn't need to prepare same additional effects for multiple pieces of equipment.

But of course, there was also a disadvantage. It seemed like it was more difficult to repair and recover the armours durability.

"From other differences, the performance changes to that of a base armour's. Although the winter clothes originally had the same amount of defence, since part of performance was allocated to protection against cold, the defence had dropped down to about 90%. Any other crafter would made it drop down to about 70% in the process."

"Plain boasting, huh. Heck, is【Equipment Consolidation】 ever being used?"

"Hardly. Even if it's used it would be only by players who are acting as net idols, dancing and singing so that they can change clothes in a blink of an eye. Also by people who want to act as superheroes and transform, purge armour."

I imagined magical girls, heroes of justice on a motorbike and a golden knight purging his armour until nothing's left.

"But as long as we have summer and winter clothes, there's no need of【Equipment Consolidation】, right?"

"True. In the warm areas I'll use just the clothes I've been using until now and in the cold ones I can just change them."

When Magi-san and Lyly said so, Cloude's smile turned deeper.

"Personally I would prefer if you wore various clothes."

"You say 'various clothes', do you have that many ideas?"

"I have an infinite number of ideas. But let's leave that for the another opportunity."

Personally, I'd rather if I didn't hear it, ever.

Since today we were unable to head straight out to collect items because of lack of time, and so I made an appointment

with Lyly to do it at later date.

Lyly alone had his winter clothes completed, Magi-san and I have had Cloude remove 【Equipment Consolidation】 from winter clothes and returned them to Cloude.

Once we gather the materials and winter clothes are complete, we planned to receive them again properly.

Also, once we were leaving Cloude told me to gather as many tailoring materials as possible since there might be some other players who'd require treatment against cold.

●

At a later date, Lyly and I met up in front of the Second Town's portal.

We both prepared ourselves for materials collection and aimed for the area in which【Fluff Cloud】mob emerged in order to collect its drop,【Cloud Fluff】we were asked for by Cloude.

"Lyly, is your equipment all right?"

"Yup, perfect. How about you, Yuncchi? You aren't wearing winter clothes."

"The cold damage hasn't been implemented yet so there shouldn't be any problem. Just, I guess I'm a little worried about how will combat go. What about our cooperation?"

"Hmm. It might be difficult for us to suddenly cooperate well with each other, so I guess we should do our best not to get in each others way, how about it?"

"Understood then."

I made sure the grip on my weapon,

【Black Maiden's Longbow】 is good and made final adjustments to my knives at my belt.

To confirm the grip on his weapon in the winter equipment's woolen gloves, Lyly held the pair of his knives in reverse grip and did some practice swings.

"As for enemies on the way, we'll mainly ignore them and head straight to where the boss is. After that, we'll register with that area's portal and go gather the materials."

"Understood. Also Yuncchi, can I propose something?"

Lyly looked up at me.

"What is it, so suddenly."

"How about we have a race who reaches the boss first?"

"What childish things are you——"Ready, go!"——woah, fast! Hey, Lyly!"

I tried to refuse, but before I could do that Lyly had one-sidedly announced the start and rushed out.

Not letting me to decide he started to dash into the woods.

I followed after him in a hurry and ended up concerning myself with the race's result.

"Yuncchi! If you don't hurry I'll beat the boss all alone!"

Since while being a crafter Lyly had a scout-type Sense build his SPEED stat was very high so he ran through the woods very quickly.

"Geez. Fine by me! I won't lose! 《Enchant》——Speed!"

In order to catch up to Lyly I put a speed increase enchant on myself.

Seeing the distance he opened between us with his surprise dash Lyly had

screamed "I need to ruuun!" and started speeding up even more while laughing.

"He's fast! Hey, enemies are gathering."

Because we moved using the shortest route to where the boss is, naturally we started gathering enemy mobs along the way.

I pulled out a knife from the belt and cut down the mobs jumping out from between the trees at me, sometimes also avoiding them.

A giant locust jumped out as if aiming to block my way——was a【Bullet Locust】.

A giant catterpillar that had fallen from the tree in an attempt to crush Lyly under it——was a【Paralyze Caterpillar】.

Equipped with hard shell, toppling trees as it rushed and spat out venom——was a【Bull Beetle】.

I cut down the Bullet Locust that was in my way and offset the Paralyse Caterpillar's free fall attack by using Bomb magic.

Normally I would ignore the opponents I can easily defeat, but since it would turn into a monster train like this, there was a need to reduce the number of monsters that gathered by a bit.

We could ignore the slow Paralyse Caterpillars.

As for the Bullet Locusts and Bull Beetles that chased us relentlessly, I turned around and shot a bow Art.

"—— 《Bow Skill – Gust of Wind》 !"

An arrow pulling a green tail behind it had penetrated the group of insect type mobs.

The arrow hasn't pierced a single mob and has passed by them, but a green wind

pressure had spread and damaged the group of insect mobs.

Relatively weak Bullet Locusts have died at once, the remaining Bull Beetles continued to chase, but once we took some distance from them, they gave up.

When I looked forward again, I saw Lyly cut the attacking mobs with knives as he passed by and continue rushing towards the boss' location.

Then in front of the boss, Lyly had decreased the speed of his run.

"Arriiived! And it's my win!"

"Haa, haa, Lyly, you're fast. Still, if we include the start dash into this we were about the same."

"Yup. But if I didn't go first we wouldn't have gotten here this fast so it's my win!"

"Yeah, that's fine."

In fact, the locusts that jumped halfway and the caterpillar's adhesive yarn were all cut through by Lyly who was preceding me, I wasn't able to do the same.

"But thanks to Yuncchi dealing with the mobs chasing from behind I could go ahead with peace of mind. Thanks."

"Good grief——"

Being thanked so straightforwardly I scratched my head a little embarrassed.

"Ah, it's no time to be standing and talking. There's nowhere near enough time for gathering materials."

There might be some other useful items other than the materials we were asked for by Cloude, there's no way we wouldn't gather those.

"You're right. Well then, let's fight the boss."

We stepped in to the location the boss was waiting in.

In an open space with lush trees blocking the light of the day, in the centre there was the boss.

The mob with elongated limbs and torso that mimicked the colour of dead branches of the surrounding trees——the【Killer Mantis】was waiting.

"First move for the win! Yuncchi, I'll be going in!"

"H-hey!"

Lyly slashed at the waiting boss.

He jumped high with his petite body and swung the knife at the mantis' inverted triangle head.

The Killer Mantis received that attack with the right sickle and counter-attacked with his left.

"Ah, damn!"

Lyly intercepted the incoming slash with the other knife he held in his left hand.

Rebounding from that, he moved away from the mantis and after twisting his body in the air he landed.

"Woah, that was dangerous!"

"What are you doing, going in without preparation! 《Enchant》 ——Attack, defence, speed!"

Feeling chills, I put on triple enchants on Lyly and myself.

Starting the fight anew, we stared at the Killer Mantis' inorganic eyes.

When I nocked an arrow Lyly held the two knives in reverse grip, aware of the blinds spots he had because and crouched, lowering his body.

After we glared at each other for a while, Lyly was the first one to move.

With power output increased by the enchants he was faster than earlier as he approached the Killer Mantis and dealt a powerful blow, but it was received by the right sickle.

The Killer Mantis once again counter-attacked at Lyly with the left sickle, but Lyly had moved away from its trajectory before he got hit.

Following that, he dealt two quick blows and retreated. Like that, Lyly continued hit and run attacks.

However, the enemy's compound insect eyes were able to react to Lyly's attacks from any angle.

Moreover, whenever he used his increased speed to force a blow through, it didn't deal too much damage to the mantis

thin yet high defence.

When Lyly was moving away the enemy took advantage of that and skimmed his shoulder, but in exchange received a painful counter-attack.

"——So the blind spots are covered thanks to the compound eyes and it has high physical defence, huh. Lyly, use a potion."

I passed a potion to Lyly by throwing it, he received and used it all at once.

Compared to the weakling mobs from the Second Town's forest, the Killer Mantis had highly unbalanced level of difficulty.

But according to Cloude, the irregular party of me and Lyly had more than enough chance of winning.

"In that case, *this* is how I'll get at him. 《Cursed》 ——Defence, mind!"

At the same time I placed the cursed on the Killer Mantis I released my arrow.

Although I applied two types of weakening on the Killer Mantis, he has cut down my flying arrow with his sickle.

However, the arrow I shot was just a decoy, Lyly who lowered his body and closed onto enemy had used the reverse grip on the knife and swung it at Killer Mantis' abdomen.

"All right! This works!"

"You're right! Let's smash him!"

Feeling a proper response to a hit from the boss, Lyly and I continued to attack.

Since Lyly has repeatedly continued his hit and run attacks he gathered a lot of hate, Killer Mantis was naturally attracted to him.

"Let's go! —— 《Rapid Fire Bow - Second

Form》!"

After I confirmed Lyly has gathered enough hate, I fired two arrows in rapid succession.

While Lyly occupied enemy's front, my arrows aimed at the enemy from the side. One of the arrows was cut down by the Killer Mantis' left sickle and the other one was repelled by the body.

"So my arrows won't pierce him."

"Yeah. We don't have enough firepower like this, Yuncchi, use an Art with more power!"

"Got it."

While Lyly attracted the enemy delivering attacks without stopping and gathered hate, I shot an high-powered Art when the delay time was over.

"I'll pierce that hard defence! —— 《Bow

Skill - Arrow Stitching》!"

I released the string I pulled very strongly, shooting an arrow at the Killer Mantis from the front.

The Killer Mantis crossed its both sickles to receive the power of the arrow enhanced by Art, but along with a loud sound the mantis' body was pushed backwards.

While the boss took a defensive posture, Lyly jumped below him and raised his knives.

"—— 《Sword Dance》!"

The knives in Lyly's hands let out a pale glow as he let out continuous attacks, his steps resembling that of a dance.

"Yuncchi, we just have to repeat this enough times!"

"You'll get hit by enemy's attacks! Your endurance isn't that high!"

"It's okay! Evasion is my speciality... woahh?! That was dangerous!"

"Geez. Don't scare me too much. I'll shoot another one in a moment!"

"Okay. Safety first then."

Right after using the Art Lyly had some time of inflexibility and was nearly hit by Killer Mantis' scythe, but managed to withdraw somehow.

I reapplied enchants on Lyly then waited for the opportunity to attack again.

"This time I'll go first! —— 《Sword Dance》 !"

Right from the front, he released the sword dance of continuous attacks at the Killer Mantis.

"Second shot! Let's go—— 《Bow Skill - Arrow Stitching》 !"

I aimed at the boss who couldn't take a defensive posture because of Lyly's continuous attacks and released an Art.

The arrow flew again and the mantis tried to block it by moving the sickle to the right, but because he didn't make it in time the arrow hit the arm joint.

Although I aimed at the vital point on its head, I delivered some damage to the arm.

With this, the boss remaining HP was 70%.

After finding a stable attack pattern that worked on enemy mob, what was left was manoeuvring as not to make a mistake.

As Lyly continued to avoid attacks in the vanguard there were some moments that scared the hell out of me, but afterwards all that was left was to repeat the same pattern.

After I shot more than ten 《Bow Skill -

Arrow Stitching》 and Killer Mantis' HP fell below 10%, we could finally see the end of it.

However, by the end the enemy's action patterns changed.

Lyly's 《Sword Dance》 attacks were avoided and my arts hit the enemy in succession. Because of that I have gathered more hate than Lyly and the target changed to me.

"Yuncchi, dodge!"

With low HP remaining the Killer Mantis opened up the wings on his back and along with vibrations he floated.

"—— 《Clay Shield》!"

Then using wings' propulsion the mantis charged at me so I created an earthen wall between me and him.

Still, the Killer Mantis tore through the

wall with the sickle arms and tried closing onto me. At that time——

"This'll be——LAST!"

Lyly let out the last attack, cutting down the boss' remaining HP.

He pounced from behind the Killer Mantis and deeply pierced the knife in his left hand into the weakly protected part hidden below thin wings.

That attack was decisive, the boss twisted his body in the air and fell to the ground.

Retaining the momentum it had when he charged at me he slid on the ground and stopped on a tree. Lyly let go of his knife and landed.

After that, the Killer Mantis turned into particles of light and when I saw Lyly's pierced knife only remain after it, I finally realized we were able to defeat the boss.

"Phew, that was tiring. As I thought, with just the two of us we had low attack power and it turned into a long battle."

"True. But personally, it felt quite simple to me."

"Is that so?"

"Yup! My【Woodworking】type crafting requires me to concentrate real hard to finish a single item so compared to that, the combat just now was much easier."

"Woah, crafters are amazing..."

"You're a crafter too, Yuncchi. Also, you're amazing too. You can attack, heal and support by yourself all at once. I can only focus really hard on one thing so that's impossible for me."

I wonder if that's really the case. It's just that I don't move much and I have a wide field of view from behind. I self-evaluated

myself like that.

"Well, for now let's move ahead. The area we're aiming for is right there."

"Right! We defeated the Killer Mantis boss without receiving much damage so it should be all right!"

I smiled wryly and said "I guess", agreeing with Lyly.

In the back of the road that was blocked by the Killer Mantis there was an even denser forest.

We proceeded through the forest that didn't have much light even during the day.

●

Inside the forest that had grown dense we started walking relaxedly, as if going on a

picnic.

"No sight of the Fluff Cloud we're looking for. Ah, a branch I can use for a staff!"

"You're right, can't find it. Well, this is the area's boundary so there's few mobs overall. Oh, there are some berry ingredients here."

Lyly and I collected the materials we were attracted to.

"It feels like we could overlook these it this darkness, but if I leave it to Yuncchi it'll be easy."

"Yeah. With that said though, trees are your speciality so focus on that."

I had the【Sky Eyes】that allowed me to see far into the distance and gave night vision, in combination with 【See-Through】it allowed me to find hidden things and see through enemy's actions. I

used that to find materials in the woods.

I carefully picked up strawberry and blueberry-like berries, when I thought of using them as materials for making a cake an overjoyed expression appeared on my face.

Lyly had used his petite body to climb on top of a tree and cut off branches with a saw, also picking up fruits from the trees while at it.

"Look, Yuncchi! There's a fruit that looks like kiwi!"

"Oh, you're right. If we gather those and pass them to Cloude, he'll have various sweets made from those."

"Then let's do our best and gather them."

At this moment, the goal inside our minds was changed from searching for the enemy mobs into collecting materials.

Moving slowly we proceeded into the back of the woods.

"Yuncchi, I'll be cutting down this tree, could you watch the surroundings for enemy?"

I moved away from the tree specified by Lyly and watched if there are any enemy mobs coming to attack.

Lyly took out an axe for woodcutting and swung it at the base of the tree.

As I admired how he looks the part despite his small body, after the tree was cut a little deep Lyly had started swinging the axe from the opposite side.

"Yuncchi! It's gonna fall so be careful!"

"Yeah, got it!"

When along a sign, Lyly had finished the last swing the tree let a sound of snapping and started to fall.

While I was overwhelmed by the sight, Lyly immediately took out a hatchet and started cutting off branches.

After a short while, the branches that couldn't be used for staffs have been scattered all around and the thick logs were put into Lyly's inventory.

"All right, it's over! Hm? What is it?"

"Mm, no, I just wondered if I can take those branches."

I picked up a branch Lyly had cut off and raised it up. He didn't need those, but I could use them as materials.

"I don't mind. Small ones are useless unless you do parquetry with them, but since the parquet materials have low durability they aren't used often."

The arrows used for【Bow】Senses are made by synthesizing three types of

materials, a tree branch, a bird's feather and a material for arrowhead.

Arrows were consumable items and had poor cost-to-performance ratio, so I did my best to provide them for myself. That's why collecting materials was important.

"To me, these logs are more important. I intend to chop down two more."

"What are you going to do with so much wood?"

"Wood has different characteristics depending on the area, you see. These ones for making sticks, staffs, also bows like yours Yuncchi. When building houses and furniture, ships and such it's better to use the logs made from the trees I had grown."

The drop from enemy mob, 【Treant Wood】 and the material for crafting Revival Medicine, the 【Wisteria Peach Petal】, the material that was a prize in the

Volcano Area's lottery, the 【Jewelled Branch of Hōrai】. There was a variety of materials such as those, but the items they were suitable for crafting with have also varied.

"I need to gather various pieces of wood and confirm their properties, then make suitable items with them. Also, it's fun to gather aged and very dry wood that has an antiqueish look."

While saying so, Lyly started cutting down the second tree.

"As I thought, there are big differences between crafting fields."

"Yeah. The particularly rare materials are ones that have 【Old】 added to the 【Tree Name】."

It's probably a classification similar to my ore and herb-based items' 【Fine】 classification, I thought upon hearing it.

"All right, the second one acquired. I'm tireed⌒."

"Cheers for good work."

As Lyly sat down on the stump of a tree he cut down with the axe, I took out a cup of tea from my inventory, intending to take some rest.

"Lyly, want some tea?"

"Thanks, Yuncchi."

Each of us took a cup of tea in our hands. Since we have gotten cold because of the【Cold Damage】's implementation, the hot tea had warmed us up as we drank it little by little.

"Still no sight of Fluff Cloud, is there."

"Yeah. Once we finish drinking let's expand our search range a litt... hey, there it is."

Between the trees there was a cloud-type mob, it had a fluffy main body and arms that looked like long bags. We found a Fluff Cloud.

Why is it that we couldn't find it when we were looking around and it appeared when we're taking a break, I thought and the term "greed sensor" crossed my head.

Lyly and I drank the remaining tea all at once without letting the Fluff Cloud out of our sights.

"Yuncchi, I burned my tongue because it was hot."

"Geez, what are you doing at a time like this."

It buurns, he said as he extended his tongue a little. While I thought about what do I do about him, the Fluff Cloud had gradually floated away into the back of the forest.

"Ah, it ran! Yuncchi, we have to chase it!"

"Is your tongue okay? 《Enchant》 —— Speed!"

I applied a speed increase enchant on Lyly and myself then chased after the Fluff Cloud that drifted through the dim forest.

Although it moved by quietly floating in the air, it was moving surprisingly fast, but we still were faster.

"Just a little more."

"Right! Woah?!!"

"?!! Yuncchi!"

When we were about to catch up to the Fluff Cloud my view has turned upside down.

Or to be exact, something like a tree's vine that hanged over my head had suddenly wrapped around my ankle and

hung me upside down.

"I'm all right! Anyway, Fluff Cloud is attacking!"

"Eh?? Woah!"

The Fluff Cloud that has been moving to the back of the forest had turned towards Lyly and after creating a pale blue sphere it attacked him with it.

Lyly immediately avoided it, but the pale blue sphere passed by my side as I hung upside down and hit the trunk of a nearby tree. A cold air had passed by me, stroking my cheek.

"T-that was dangerous. I better do something and quick."

I shook myself and using the momentum I raised my upper body, took out a knife tied to the belt at my waist and cut off the vine wrapping around my foot.

At the same time I twisted my body thrown in the air and somehow managed to land on all fours...

"Seriously? It's not just a trap but an actual mob?"

I didn't notice because my 【See-Through】 Sense didn't perceive a trap or a mob, but what tangled around my leg was a plant-type mob.

The cut-off barbed vine rose up, regenerated turning as if it was brand new and aimed the tip at me.

Not perceiving a mob that was only a little bit different from one that appeared during an event, a 【Thorn Plant】, was my mistake.

"Lyly! I'll take care of this one!"

"G-got it, be careful!"

Lyly seemed like he'd be fine even if he

got hit by the cold blue ball, but despite the fact the Fluff Cloud's attacks were weak, he was forced to defend.

On the other hand, I watched the plant-type mob, the Thorn Plant stretch its vines from on top of a tree.

Since enemy's body was too thin to attack it with a bow, it turned out that I have to deal with it by using a kitchen knife.

"Let's hurry up and get rid of them and pick up materials from Fluff Cloud——nhh, coldd?!"

When I raised my kitchen knife and tried to cut the Thorn Plant, I received a light shock to my head and a cold air had spread throughout my whole body making me involuntarily shudder.

Feeling cold as if someone threw a snowball at me I wondered what was it,

after I looked in the direction the cold had come from I saw one more fluffy existence other than the one we chased.

"Damn!! A new one, in that case——hyihh?!"

Just when I was about to use Earth Element Magic to defeat the new enemy, an impact hit me from behind and surprised by the cold like ice attack I fell forward.

"W-wait a sec! This is strange! This amount of damage is damn strange!"

I protested loudly. It was the same mob Lyly was dealing with and used the same attacks. And there shouldn't be much difference between mine and Lyly's magic defence.

And yet, it felt like I received far more damage than him when the ball of cold air hit me.

"Argh! I'll take down Fluff Cloud first——heyy, oww! An attack from there, too?!"

The Thorn Plant swung its vine-like body and attacked me from the front, from the left and right Fluff Clouds attacked me with balls of cold air.

That's when another Fluff Cloud had appeared and before I realized I was consecutively attacked by three Fluff Clouds and a Thorn Plant.

I intercepted the hurled spheres of cold air with my knife, but every time I cut them apart cold caused my arms to grow numb and I received a lot of damage from cold itself.

"Uuu, cold. The 【Cold Damage】 is seriously horrible."

The update this time was implementing environmental 【Cold Damage】. I was already aware of the 【Cold Damage】

caused by magic like Sei-nee's ice magic, but it was now that I realized how horrifying it actually is.

Since cold made my limbs grow more and more numb like slip damage, my attacks started to delay. The Fluff Cloud's movement inhibition was really annoying, making me frustrated.

"Yuncchi, help!"

"Hey, you were surrounded too, Lyly?"

Lyly who fought against just one opponent at first was now surrounded by six Fluff Clouds and desperately avoided a barrage of cold air.

Since I was equipped with armour that was processed to improve resistance against cold I could afford getting hit by 【Cold Damage】 a few times, but I was overwhelmed by numbers.

I tried to counter-attack with everything I had, but since I wasn't as good at avoiding as Lyly my body grew numb as I received attacks.

And——

"Cut it out dammit! —— 《Zone Bomb》!"

I captured all enemy mobs within the range in my sight, that was including the Fluff Clouds Lyly was fighting with, and targeted them all.

The activated bomb magic simultaneously blew up enemy targets. Although Fluff Clouds didn't fall with a single blow, in places enemies were grouped up they received damage from multiple bombs and thanks to chain damage bonus the mobs disappeared.

"They're thinned out now. I should fix my position right noooo——"

Most of the Fluff Clouds disappeared after being hit by bombs. However, while I was distracted by explosions the Thorn Plant snuck up under my feet and hung me upside down again.

"Ngh?! This time the thorns pierced in!!"

The vines have tied my legs together and hardened, then grew thorns.

Those hardened vines couldn't be easily cut, the thorns bit in and slowly delivered damage along dull pain.

And, once again Fluff Clouds started gathering to fire balls of cold air at me as I was hanging.

"Hyah! Not my neck! My arms and legs are bare so they're cold too!"

I received【Cold Damage】and shivered from the cold. If I knew this would happen, I would have taken even the incomplete

winter clothes from Cloude.

"Damn, Fluff Clouds gathered again!"

"Yuncchi, help!"

"Shit. In this case, I'll do it as I am——《Zone Bomb》!"

While hung upside down with reversed vision I once again had the Fluff Clouds explode.

All of the surviving enemy mobs' hate has gathered on me, their target changed from Lyly to me. Unable to avoid their attacks with cold air I endured while rubbing my arms from cold.

But since I received enemy attacks in quick succession, the chain damage and【Cold Damage】's slip damage had accumulated, eroding my HP.

Then finally——

"Yuncchi! Yuncchi!"

My HP was completely exhausted, strength left my body and my field of view dimmed. The kitchen knife I held fell from my hands.

What I felt at the same time, was a warm world. Rather than the cold forest, I felt warm and peaceful world of darkness.

Hearing Lyly's voice in the distance I saw a white window appear in my field of vision in the darkness and a choice was displayed.

—— 『 Use Revival Medicine? YES/NO 』

If I am to revive in a place full of swirling cold air, I'd rather return to town after death. I felt a sweet temptation like that,

but shook it off.

While I wondered at what timing should I revive, I heard Lyly's voice in the distance.

"I won't let Yuncchi stay dead! Shiacchi□□《Summon》!"

Lyly seems to have summoned the immortal bird, Neshias from the summoning stone. Even in the darkened view I could feel the phoenix's light, the vines burning and my back hitting the ground.

Ghh, oww□□!

As felt horrible pain running through my back, warmth had wrapped around my whole body and my vision had gradually returned as I was scooped up from the darkness.

"□□HA!"

I felt myself returning from death, as if

waking up.

When I raised my body in a hurry, I saw Lyly's tamed mob Neshias fight with a Fluff Cloud.

Apparently, the Thorn Plant was defeated by Neshias' attack and I was brought back with his【Revival】.

But even with me being revived, Lyly was in a real bad situation.

I did deal damage to several Fluff Clouds with my 《Zone Bomb》, but new ones seemed to have gathered again . The density of the cold air ball attacks had increased and the place Lyly was in turned into a snowstorm.

"Yuncchi, I leave the rest to you..."

Leaving these words behind his HP turned zero as if switching with mine, and he fell inside the mini-snowstorm.

Then, with his summoner, Lyly, defeated Neshias was unable to maintain his presence and turned into particles of light returning to the summoning stone.

"Nono, wait, don't leave it all to me!!"

What am I supposed to do when I'm so outnumbered?! I protested in my mind, but in the end I only had one choice.

"Let's go! —— 《Zone Bomb》 !"

At the same time as I activated bomb magic on all mobs I could see, I ran over to fallen Lyly held him under my arm.

"Strategical retreat! ——【Clay Shield】! 【Bomb】!"

Holding Lyly to my side I ran towards the exit of the dark forest.

Because I was defeated once and revived, the enchants that were applied on me were all gone. In this situation rather than

reapply them, it was better to take action to prevent Fluff Clouds from chasing us, so I scattered Magic Gems as I ran.

"Lyly! Wake up! We're running!"

"Y-yeah..."

Lyly must have revived himself with his own Revival Medicine as he woke up when I called him.

"Aa-aah, we lost. But it's fine since we got the 【Cloud Fluff】 from the mobs we defeated earlier, right."

"This is no time to act carefree——hihh! A ball of cold hit my back!"

Although I pulled quite far away from them by scattering Magic Gems behind me, since Fluff Clouds had a long-range attacks their balls of cool air hit me from a distance.

In any case, after escaping outside of the

area at full force we ran out of the dark forest and passed through the forest near the Second Town we finally returned to the secure town.

"Whezee... somehow, escaped."

"Yuncchi, are you all warmed up after running so much?"

Certainly, my body had warmed up when I ran but I was attacked from behind and also felt unpleasant after getting covered in cold and normal sweat.

That's when I remembered I escaped while holding Lyly under my arm.

"I forgot. Since you revived halfway I should have stopped and let you down."

If I did, I wouldn't be this tired, I muttered inside my mind.

In the end, I ended up escaping all the way here while holding Lyly, as a result

ending up covered with sweat.

I was dragged by Taku and Myu to fight strong enemies before, but this time was completely different.

Every mob here was weak by itself.

Certainly, they were stronger than the mobs appearing in the forest near Second Town, but Lyly and I were more than strong enough.

However, the enemy shot attacks of cold air causing【Cold Damage】. Each attack didn't deal much damage but they gathered in numbers, their behaviour meshed together well making something like cooperation causing us to easily lose.

When Lyly gathered too many Fluff Clouds and caused a tiny blizzard I got honestly scared.

"Yuncchi, how about we go rest a little at

Kurocchi's place?"

"...You're right, let's do that."

I heaved a sigh from fatigue and together with Lyly transitioned from the Second Town's portal to the First Town, then went to Cloude's 【Commonest Café & Clothier】.

On the way, we reflected upon the hunt this time.

Chapter 2

The Winter Event and the Quest

"Let's refleeect! Bambam pompom!"

"What's with those sound effects, they're lacking motivation..."

"I just wanted to say it."

Seeing Lyly say so and smile wryly, I also made the same smile.

Thanks to the drops we got from the Fluff Clouds when we escaped from a group of them, we somehow managed to satisfy the requirements for materials to improve equipment.

For now, I'd like to leave the materials with Cloude and hope the winter clothes are made even if a day earlier.

I decided that until they are, I won't take

a single step inside areas that had enemies attacking with cold air.

And currently, Lyly and I were sitting in the【Commonest Café & Clothier】with a table between us.

Since we were in a very cold environment because of the Fluff Cloud attacks, reviewing what happened in a warm café felt like heaven.

Both of us called our tamed mobs and ate sweets together.

"First of all, what I should reflect on is the fact I allowed the Thorn Plant to surprise me. I couldn't find it despite having the【See-Through】Sense. Also, I underestimated【Cold Damage】. That thing is seriously dangerous."

As a result of receiving【Cold Damage】in my summer clothes, I received endless slip damage like that of poisons.

"In this case Yuncchi's 【See-Through】 Sense must have had lower level than Thorn Plant's Concealment-type Sense. Also, couldn't you use your 《Element Enchant》 to raise water resistance?"

"...I totally forgot."

Because it was too sudden of an event, I forgot about the application of the enchant that I have tried on Magi-san before.

"In that case the points to reflect upon is my low level of 【See-Through】 Sense and lack of ability to match all means I have available to ongoing situation."

Haa, I sighed.

Even though we were right before the event, I got depressed by my own no-good parts.

"I'm next, right. If I beat the first Fluff Cloud that appeared, the others wouldn't

have gathered in such numbers. I only survived their attacks thanks to having winter clothing that were processed in a way to resist cold."

"Also, we should have switched positions earlier."

Lyly didn't have any skills allowing him to take on multiple opponents so he should have fought against the Thorn Plant instead of Fluff Clouds.

Moreover, since I had the 《Zone Bomb》 that could attack all mobs within the range of my sight I could do better against Fluff Clouds that had low defence, rather than fight very thin Thorn Plant.

Unable to assess the situation like that made me feel like I'm still lacking player skill.

"But, I actually am happy that we failed this time."

"You're happy?"

"Yup. I was able to find out how does Shiacchi's【Revival】work."

I listened to Lyly explanation on his tamed mob's, the phoenix Neshias' 【Revival】.

"When Shiacchi uses【Revival】a lot of my MP is taken, it made me understand I can't use it randomly."

"Well, no wonder, since the tamed mob skills use the summoner's MP."

I didn't check Lyly's MP back then, but considering the way he spoke, it must have consumed quite a lot of it.

"Even with my MP being full, I could use it at most twice in a row."

"I see. Twice... then, what about when you yourself were defeated?"

"That part is important too. In fact when I was defeated, before the 'Use of Revival Medicine' menu, a menu with 'Auto-Revival by using Shiacchi's skill' had appeared first, but I didn't have enough MP for using that."

In other words, to use Neshias' 【Revival】 the summoner Lyly needs to consume a large amount of MP, and in case of Lyly's auto-revival it uses the MP he had remaining.

Moreover, the menu displays revival using Neshias as a priority, but in this case it ended with shortage of MP.

"Hey, isn't Neshias a tamed mob for rearguard players?"

"You're right. Moreover, his qualities make him more appropriate for parties."

Thinking of that, with Lyly's fighting style that's very close to that of a vanguard

scout he had nowhere near enough MP to use Neshias' abilities to the fullest.

Because of that, Lyly's and Neshias' sense builds could be said to be have poor compatibility.

"Well, since I normally don't use much MP, as long as I'm alone it's not a bad idea to use MP on Shiacchi."

"Right. But if it triggers faster than a Revival Medicine and you can't control it by yourself you might get revived in a state without MP and disadvantaged."

"Let's think a little bit more about that."

Neshias was a rare young beast that had a revival skill, but it didn't mean it was something easy to use.

"I need to do my best as well as not to lose to Shiacchi, right."

Lyly took out the berries he collected in

the dark forest, put them on his palm and held out to Neshias.

Seeing Lyly happily feed Neshias who pecked the berries from his hand I though that for Lyly, rather than ease of use, the hard work as partners was more important. Such a vague thought crossed my mind.

I want to do my best with Ryui and Zakuro as well, I felt and looked towards the two. Ryui ate the cream puffs I bought from the【Commonest Café & Clothier】in one bite, while Zakuro had his nose covered in custard cream.

"Good grief, I'll clean you up."

I called him over and wiped his nose.

With Lyly's and my review over I sighed and drank some tea, at that time a black shadow came from the back of the store and jumped on my lap.

"Woah?! Socks, what happened?"

Even though just the other day he was a kitten, he turned big all at once. Socks curled up after jumping on my lap.

Ryui also often put his head on top of my lap, is my lap really that nice? I wondered.

Then, with a delay after Socks, Cloude has made his appearance.

"Kurocchi, good joob⁓. Were you able to collect materials?"

"It took a while but we gathered the expected number by repeating the Arachne boss. But with the 【Heat Damage】 changes it was too difficult to advance into the Volcano Area without prior preparation."

He said and sighed deeply.

The reason Magi-san wasn't here, must have been because she left the materials

with Cloude and went to the Volcano Area alone.

"So, how long will it take for Magi-san's and my winter clothes to complete?"

"I also have request from a lot of players, so. At fastest it'll be just before the event's update."

"I see, in that case you can get my winter clothes after the update. At first I'll deal with【Cold Damage】 to some extent by using items and skills."

"If you say so then I'll finish them up during event, but why?"

Hearing me say that Cloude furrowed his eyebrows.

"Well, I thought of trying to make some Christmas cakes first."

My little sister Myu seemed like she wanted to eat a strawberry cake and a fruits

roll cake, is what I was too embarrassed to say, so I'll just say some mundane reason.

"Mm. Well, I bet it's some reason like your little sister wanting to eat some."

"H-how did you know?!"

Hmph, Cloude snorted at me.

"We know each other for nearly half a year now. I can tell you're really soft on your little sister."

Is that really so? I wondered after hearing Cloude's words and turned towards Lyly, who nodded with a wry smile.

"Well, I understand your reason for wanting to make cakes. But you'll feel cold if you make it in your summer clothes. I'll give you some substitute armour."

"Really?! Thanks!"

"Yuncchi, if you agree before asking

Kurocchi for details——"

"Fufufu, let's start by having you wear these clothes."

While saying so Cloude took out clothes with a white base, a chocolate-coloured apron with a skirt and a hat of the same colour.

These clothes somewhat resembled cook uniform and I knew similar clothes.

"This is... what Fior-san is wearing..."

This equipment was very similar to that of 【Commonest Café & Clothier】's crafter in charge of kitchen, Fior-san.

"Exactly, it differs from Fior's patissière dress in colour. The kitchen is surprisingly cold y'know. Treatment against cold is perfect on this."

"Hey, aren't there any oth——"There aren't."——yes sir."

Cloude interrupted with a satisfied smile.

I understood I couldn't change Cloude's decision and slumped. As long as I lock myself in the【Atelier】's workshop I won't be seen in these clothes by too many people.

Thinking it might be nice to use a patissière's clothing to make cakes, I swallowed my tears, bearing with it.

"If you're making cakes, give us some to eat as well."

"Yaay, Yuncchi's cake!"

"Your place is a café, you eat those all time don't you."

"Fior is doing her best on Christmas cakes, but unfortunately they're all for customers and there are none left for us."

"Good grief. Then it'll be a cake instead of rental fee for this armour."

"I look forward to it. In that case, let's exchange the Christmas cake for the completed winter clothes."

"Yes yes, got it."

I receiver the patissière's clothing from Cloude, then on the way back to the【Atelier】I purchased materials required for making the cakes.

After returning to【Atelier】I locked myself in the workshop part and changed into patissière uniform.

The stone workshop was very cold, and since I felt chilly in Ochre Creator the moment I changed clothes the cold had subsided.

I started preparing the cake.

"Hmm. Is this temperature on the oven fine?"

I carried over the oven from the store

part back to the workshop, lit the stove up and raised the temperature inside the oven.

In the meantime, I prepared generous amount of sponge dough and whipped cream.

With round sponge dough I could make the strawberry cake, with a square one I could make the fruit roll cake.

While calculating the time the dough needs to grow I mixed the beaten eggs with sugar and flour, then poured in a mould. In the meantime I prepared the whipped cream and fruits I acquired in the dark forest.

"The whipped cream has become the base, but how's the sweetness?"

I added some sugar making it modestly sweet. Since wild fruits were just as sweet and delicious as the ones sold in the store I went easy on the cream's sweetness,

bringing out the sweetness of the fruits themselves.

"All that's left is to bake the dough and wait... hm? What is it, Ryui?"

Then I noticed, Ryui and Zakuro were looking up pleadingly.

Ahead of their line of sight there was my hand holding the eggbeater with whipped cream remaining on it.

"Geez. Just a little, okay."

When I put a little of whipped cream and cut fruits on small plates, Ryui and Zakuro ate it right away, they even licked the plates clean.

Ryui must have been satisfied as he returned to the back of the workshop.

But Zakuro continued to lick the plate time after time again.

"You really love sweet things, don't you."

"Right? Ah, of course I love them too."

I thought I was alone in the workshop, but hearing a voice I looked behind me.

"One cake for fairies please."

When I turned around, I saw the Mischievous Fairy that often came to play in the【Atelier】.

"Haa, an order from someone else again huh. Good grief, fine."

"Yaay! Then please!"

Saying just that, the Mischievous Fairy suddenly disappeared.

Seeing just a few cut fruits disappear as well I smiled bitterly at that mischief and once again started cutting the fruits I had remaining.

After that, I started with the strawberry cake I was already experienced in making of.

I sliced the baked sponge caked from the side, put whipped cream and strawberries inside.

Then, after covering the entire cake with cream I decorated it with more cream and strawberries. Although the strawberry cake was completed, the way I squeezed the whipped cream wasn't too good and it looked awkward.

"Mm, I don't like it."

However, it was still the first one, I thought and finished another one which looked a little better, but still didn't look nice.

Afterwards, in order to make a satisfactory cake I repeated that. After a few days I ended up making twelve whole

cakes.

Because of that, I didn't have enough ingredients for the fruit roll cake, having to purchase them after a few days. Then I made six roll cakes.

Since making cakes required that much concentration, my【Cook】Sense went up to level 14 all at once, which was a big gain.

And, since I immersed myself in making cakes over a few days I totally forgot.

"Speaking of which, I didn't do anything to prepare for the event."

That said though, I had consumables such as potions in the【Atelier】so there was no need to hurry.

However, to form a party you need other people to agree on it.

"I don't know any details on the event, but maybe Magi-san and others will party

up with me?"

I put away the finished cakes in the inventory and made a friend call to Magi-san.

"Magi-san, can you talk now?"

『"Yup, it's fine. What is it?"』

"Uh, how about we form a party for the event? Is what I wanted to ask."

『"Aww, sorry. This time I have a lot of requests for equipment I need to deal with, I was also supposed to party up with【Crafting Guild】's members at first but I'm too busy."』

"Is that so. So you're with the guild..."

『"Yup. Cloude and Lyly are also acting alone, but we intend to party up at times for the event. If we had more time we could party up with you, Yun-kun but... I'm really sorry."』

"Please don't mind it. As someone who hasn't joined the【Crafting Guild】I'm not in a position to complain about not partying together."

『"Sorry, really."』

"Please don't mind it, although it is a shame."

Hearing Magi-san apologize in a regretful voice I told her not to mind it too much.

The【Crafting Guild】was a guild that acted as central management for material trade for crafters and auctions. There was no need to join it in order to use their services, so even though I didn't join the guild I helped out a little bit in establishing the guild.

Of course it wasn't just me, there were other players involved in founding the guild, and there were also members who

maintained it. That's why I don't think I, an outsider should be prioritized and the guild members be neglected.

"So Lyly and Cloude are no good either."

『"Looks like it. The two have their crafter acquaintances to play with. Speaking of Cloude, earlier an NPC delivered my winter clothes."』

"Is that so, understood. I see, so this time I'll have to participate solo, huh."

『"Don't you have any other acquaintances? You're well known, right?"』

"I wish that was the case."

Taku and Myu, Sei-nee and others were playing mostly in fixed parties, it might be possible to join them temporarily, but it's hard to imagine that could be the case during the event.

It wouldn't be too bad to invite Emily-san

and Letia who were about as strong as me, but I don't know if they'll accept...

"Well, I'll do my best solo at first."

『"But if it turns out you can't do it alone, make sure to rely on us."』

"Yes, do your best in moderation as well, Magi-san."

『"Same to you, Yun-kun."』

Although it was a friend call where I couldn't see her face, I imagined Magi-san wink and smiled wryly.

After that, the call ended and I went outside to the field in the back of the【Atelier】for a change of pace.

In there, was the Wisteria Peach Tree blooming in cold winter and leaning towards the wooden deck.

Despite how cold the air was, I was

healed by the pink flowers reminding me of spring.

I stretched under the open sky and relaxed my shoulders.

"Well, it'll work out somehow this time as well."

Thinking optimistically about the winter event, I logged out of OSO.

When I log in again, it'll be probably after the event update has finished.

●

A bustling square. I stood among the players who gathered right after OSO's update and engaged in light conversations.

It was my first time logging in after the update.

I finished my preparations all alone and matching my log in time with Myu and Taku I gathered together with acquaintances before we start playing.

Myu, Taku and others also made preparations for this day.

Not only they did leveling and procured items, but also had 【Cold Damage】's countermeasures.

Taku's looks didn't change much, he only got long sleeves that reduced the exposure to cold. There was however, a large change to Myu.

"Onee-chan, you look cold, will you be okay?"

"Actually, it's okay since I'm using items for countermeasure against 【Cold Damage】. Rather than that, I see your armour changed, Myu."

Myu's armour had a long white dress covering her legs below her knees, was equipped with silver plate armour and felt like it had much higher defence than the one she had used so far.

Also, her armour up until now had the back, arms and legs exposed making it seem cold, but the new equipment had very low exposure. The only part exposed were the shoulders, but the person herself seemed fine with that.

"Right?! It was just finished! I asked Magi-san to maintain the defence as she added countermeasures against【Cold Damage】and she made it using metal of fire and light element! Although the exposure is smaller than that of previous armour's, this is cute in its own way!"

As her brother I was relieved that the exposure had decreased, I also understood the reason why Magi-san was so busy right

before the event.

"I'll go talk with some other people about the event."

After boasting of her new armour to me, Myu entered the circle of players elsewhere.

Until the official event's announcement starting, Myu and others went around speaking with various people. Unable to keep up with everyone I shut my eyes and waited for the announcement to end.

"...Yun... Yun."

For the event this time I'm going solo.

Since I was a crafter, I felt a little uneasy and nervous.

If possible, I'd like to do the mini-events I can do alone, while I thought that——

"...Yun!"

Hearing my own name spoken loudly from up close, I held down my ear and turned around.

There, a little displeased, stood Taku.

"?!! W-what is it Taku?"

"I've been calling you for a while now, but you ignored me with your eyes closed."

"Sorry. I was lost in thoughts."

"Nervous? Are you okay alone?"

"I'm fine alone... I hope so, at least."

"We have one empty slot in our party, it's still not too late, wanna join?"

Taku's party members turned towards me and waved their hands with smiles, so I lightly waved back and answered.

"I don't know what kind of event it'll be, but well, I'll go at my own pace."

"Yun, are you refraining yourself from something with us? We don't mind at all! So why don't you join our party?"

"No, simply speaking it's that I'd have hard time matching your pace."

"Ugh!"

When I answered looking straight into his eyes, Taku seemed to have had an idea what was it about as he gasped.

It certainly did seem like he worried about me, but on my side – I already decided to go at my own pace.

"Well, thanks for worrying about me."

"Sure, come rely on us any time!"

Seeing him put on a pretence of a big bro, I muttered "good grief" and laughed quietly.

And the official event's announcement

had started again.

『"I shall now explain the winter event. This explanation can be also looked up through the menu in a video or text form."』

The announcement was spoken in female voice and a huge three-dimensional image was projected on the First Town's sky.

It was the same situation as that of the camp event last time. And, the person who appeared was——"

『"Dear players, it has been a while. Also nice to meet all of you who see me for the first time. I'm Yoshino Kazuhito, the chief of【OSO】's development department."』

The boss of the development department appeared in person.

Similarly to the previous event, Yoshino

Kazuhito started explaining the event.

『"This time's time-limited event has been adjusted so that it can be enjoyed by new players as well. This event will be in short—— a【Quest】!"』

When he said that and waved his hand, NPCs with troubled expressions appeared.

『"Ever since forever, games and quests were inseparable. And quests here, are the troubles of the town's inhabitants. And so, we'll have you players resolve the problems in the First Town that have taken form of【Quests】!"』

That's a really classic event. While I thought so, I was relieved knowing that aside from the mob subjugation quests there will also be collection and errand quests I will be able to do alone.

『"The event spans over three weeks until Christmas, during this time you have to

resolve the quests all over the town and reclaim its peace!"』

Declaring that, the development department's chief raised a coin between his fingertips.

『"And during the time-limited event quests this time, we have prepared special Quest Chips that will be awarded in addition to normal quest rewards!"』

The Quest Chip he had raised must be an important item for this event, everyone thought and looked up at the 3d image.

『"The Quest Chips are rewards for clearing event's quests, if you acquire large number of these you can exchange them for a variety of items on the last day of the event! You will be able to choose the rewards accordingly to the amount of Quest Chips you have acquired. All of the event's participants will receive two types of special rewards depending on the total

percentage of quests resolved."』

There, he interrupted for a moment before speaking the last part.

『"You're free to resolve large-scale raid quests in large groups! Act out an ally of justice and defeat the great evil lurking in the town! Improve the atmosphere of the town by fulfilling multiple of little requests of the townspeople! Although there's no prize this time, you will receive a reward corresponding to the amount of chips you gather, you can even get the same rewards there have been last time. Either aim for large amounts of chips by challenging highly-risky quests, or diligently collect chips by doing low-risk quests. There are various ways to enjoy yourself!"』

That explanation had excited all the players that have gathered.

My mood has also grown merrier as well.

After that there were additional explanations on the event, but few players listened to those.

Quest Chips are not transferable. After the exchange period of chips for items ends, they will be automatically exchange for 30kG per chip. It was possible to take multiple time-limited quests from the quest boards installed all over the town. There were few important explanations like that.

Other than that it was said that there were quests you could take directly from the NPCs. The quests that have been resolved at least once by others and the quests that were not have differed in colour.

『"Well then, dear players! I wish you luck!"』

Along with the voice resounding, the 3D image in the sky cracked apart, turned into

particles of light.

The particles of light transformed into snow and descended upon the entire town as white powder.

The snow had gradually covered the town dyeing it white, at the same time NPCs who weren't in the town have appeared from inside the buildings.

"So it started——the winter quest event."

I muttered quietly and confirmed that I can watch the video from earlier through my menu. Meanwhile the players in the surroundings have started moving.

Everyone rushed towards the quest boards installed all over the town in order to get a good quest ahead of others.

"Chaaarge! First for the event queestt!"

Sprinting in in the lead of all that, was Myu.

Myu and others who listened to the event explanation together with me, had split up from the group the moment explanation had ended and rushed to the quest board.

From time to time she kicked off walls and ran on top of the roofs as she aimed for the quest board, so I quickly lost sight of her.

"We'll be going to take a look at the quest board as well, but..."

Taku said, and hesitated for a moment.

"I'll... take my time."

Thinking of this number of people, even if I headed over there now I probably wouldn't be able to reach the quest board. In which case, there was no need to rush.

"I see. Then we'll match your pace."

"Is that fine? Um... Myu and others rushed over there already."

"Rather than hurry and take the first quest there is, we'll look for a good subjugation-type quest. What about you, Yun?"

"I'll do some errand-type quests."

"You can do some subjugation quests as well, don't you? Why would you do the quests anyone can do? Won't it be more efficient if you join the party and we take subjugation quests together?"

"I just want to do those. C'mon, we arrived in front of the quest board."

As we spoke, we arrived in front of the quest board.

In front of the board there was open space that fit me, Taku and his party. Hurry up and pick your quest, I pointed my finger at it to relay so.

"I see, got it! We'll be going then, do your

best as well!"

"I'll be questing in moderation."

I lightly bumped fists with Taku and sent him off to the quest board.

Well then, I'll probably only be able to check the quest board leisurely only after some time passes, I thought and avoided it heading towards the edge of the road. That's when something suddenly caught my eye.

"...where is this? I want to go home."

By the edge of the road there was a boy who squat down and held his knees. I could hear him mutter quietly.

The boy who spoke in very quiet, subtle voice was probably not a player, but an NPC.

Still, pretending not to see the child NPC's sad expression would leave a bad

after-taste, so I approached him and spoke.

"What happened? Why are you in a place like this?"

"...I was separated from mom."

The boy looked up at me with tearful expression, so I made a smile as to reassure him.

"Then let's look for her together. I'll help you."

"Really? Thank you, Onee-chan."

I was relieved seeing him make a wonderfully cute smile. I'm a man though, I thought on the other hand.

That's when a message appeared in my menu.

——You received the quest——

I somehow felt that to be the case, but the boy really was a quest NPC.

And it was a quest one can receive by speaking directly with NPC, one that was explained a while earlier.

At this rate it seems like I'll get involved with various NPC quests in the town, I thought as I held the boy's hand and started to look for his mother.

After that, we searched around for his mother for a while.

I asked the boy for his mother's characteristics and then asked NPCs in surroundings for a woman looking like her, collecting fragmentary information.

It took us thirty minutes to arrive at

location the boy was shopping with his mother when they separated, and were finally able to find her.

"Thank you, Onee-chan!"

"Really, thank you very much!"

The youthful mother in her early twenties lowered her head deeply.

She continued to bow so I stopped her in a hurry. I'm an Onii-san though, I muttered in my mind meanwhile.

The two held hands and left mixing into the crowd, that's when the quest completion message appeared.

——You completed the quest——

【Looking for Lost Child's Parent】

And a single Quest Chip was added to my inventory's list of important items.

Although there was no reward other than the Quest Chip, thinking that it has the value of 30kG, it seemed quite good reward for an errand quest.

"Still, finally got one. Its merely the start huh."

When I thought about heading to the quest board, I saw one of the NPCs I have asked for information when I was searching the lost boy's mother, sitting on a bench by the roadside.

"Hello."

"Yeah, she was by the fruit and vegetable shop."

"That's great. So, do you need anything of me?"

The old woman with a purple shawl

covering her shoulders asked, making me wonder on how to answer.

Should I ask flat out "give me a quest?". That sounds bland, I don't think that's it.

The goal of this event is bringing back the town's peace, so——

"Umm, do you know any people in trouble, or have any trouble to resolve?"

"Oh my, are you a handyman?"

The old woman opened her eyes wide with surprise.

"There's been lots of these recently. Monsters grew even more rampant making hunters and miners unable to progress with their work. Because of that there isn't enough goods in the town. The prices of meat and vegetables is on the rise, everyone is having a hard time."

Oh, so that's the problem that arose in

the First Town.

Rather than some impending crisis, incoming horde of mobs, it was a pretty plain problem.

Then, housewife NPCs started gathering around the old woman to hold a gossip meeting.

"Did you hear? My daughter dropped a vase and hurt her leg. Because of that the bag I wanted her to deliver wasn't delivered. But maybe a handyman would do that for me?"

"My, good idea. I want to send some clothes to my son and his wife as well, but there's too much of it for me to carry."

"I want to send a potted plant I raised as my hobby to my hobby friends."

Unable to slip out of the gossiping circle I listened to all of that, and then the old

woman in purple shawl had spoke to me as the representative.

"Hey, you're a handyman aren't you? Could you undertake everyone's delivery requests?"

"Well, if possible then——"

The moment I said that, a menu with a message had appeared in front of me.

——You received the quest——

【Postman】

I received the quest, as well as the NPCs quest items and a map with delivery destinations marked.

"Thank you for undertaking it. Deliver it directly to the people that are located on

this map."

When I agreed, the gossip circle NPCs had spread apart and left.

"But well, speaking to that NPC triggered the quest."

Not completely understanding, I received the quest and started walking towards the delivery location marked on the map.

On the way I passed by the quest board, it seemed to have calmed down after the first dash to it and there were few people standing in front of it.

A little further, a group of players gathered and was calling out.

"We're recruiting for raid quest【Wyvern Subjugation】! We want to go for it with a well-balanced parties! Twenty to go!"

"I want to complete a potion delivery

quest so please sell me potions you have on hand! I pay 1,5 times the original price!"

"Won't anyone join us for the quest? The reward's good!"

I listened to the voices of the people near the quest board, and it seemed like it was related to raid-level subjugation and delivery quests.

The delivery-type quests require you to bring various materials ranging from crafted items to materials, I need to check them out later, I thought and passed by the quest board.

For the moment, I headed to the delivery destination to clear the【Postman】quest.

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"Oh my! Such a slim girl doing delivery!

You sure did your best!"

"There was nothing really perishable there, you didn't have to hurry and deliver it today! But cheers for good work!"

"But look! She's got a splendid donkey! It must have carried the luggage for her so it's all right!"

"Aww no! That's not a donkey, but a horse!"

""""Ahahahaha!""""

Right now, I was surrounded by middle-aged women with strong physique who laughed loudly.

I was unable to find the delivery destinations for the【Postman】quest for all of yesterday, and it took me two days to pass the quest items to the target NPCs.

While at it I summoned the two tamed beasts Ryui and Zakuro, and in the very

end of the quest I was dragged into the gossip circle again by the old women. Suffering slight convulsions, I had to wait until all of it was over.

Ryui sighed seeming to want to go home as soon as possible, Zakuro was surprised by the womens' loud voices and hid in the hood of my clothes, only his two tails sticking out.

"Well then, I'll write you a note saying that we properly received it!"

Once the rambling was finally over, the old women said so and wrote their names on paper and gave me the note. I received the quest item called "Delivery Certificate".

With this, I had delivery certificate of all recipients, what was left was to return to the quest-giver NPCs to finish the quest.

Since the last location for delivery was adjusted so that it's near the quest-giving

NPC, I was able to return quite fast.

"Oh my, is the delivery over? Here's your reward then."

——You completed the quest——

【Postman】

"If we need something else we'll count on you again, miss handyman."

"Understood."

I received the reward from the old woman NPC in purple shawl, bowed lightly and left.

The delivery quest's reward were two Quest Chips and a little bit of money. So just three Quest Chips so far, huh. Still, there's been other things I gained.

I didn't take two days just to deliver the items to NPCs.

I checked out the quest boards installed in various parts of the town.

There was one in the town's centre, and on in the North, South, East and West each making five in total. The quests posted in each place were slightly different.

Although there were subjugation-type quests on each board, the errand and delivery types had their special characteristics that differed by the quest board location.

For example, the quests on the board on the East side were weapon delivery quests and on the West there were potion delivery quests.

Also, when I talked to the NPCs I delivered the quest items to, I was able to learn a lot about the problems happening

in the town.

Where and who, in what situation they are, and what help do they need. Since I noted down all such information I heard, it took me two days to finish the quest.

And I was able to learn that those quests were hidden and not posted on the quest boards.

"I investigated, but the lost child quest from yesterday, as well as the delivery quest weren't on any quest board. Which means that they were hidden quests that are not put up on boards."

I muttered to myself and received a quest posted on the South side's quest board.

"There are the potion delivery quests on the West side, but it's not like I need to do them now, so let's start with this."

On the South side by the wide fields and

the internal side of the outer walls, there was the so-called unpopular quest board, not many of its quests were completed.

From among the quests on it I took——【Help With Farm Work】.

I went to speak with the Farmer NPC who previously helped me with herb cultivation and 【Atelier】's construction work.

"Oh, it's you. What's up today?"

"Actually I came to undertake the quest, could you explain it to me?"

"Oh, that's great help."

The Farmer NPC who stood there with his arms folded, pointed at the field in the corner.

"Then I'll explain your work. Plough this unseeded land here. You can mix the weeds together with soil, they'll become fertilizer."

Since I had experience from when I prepared the field with herbs from nothing for the【Atelier】, the designated work felt very limited.

"Got it. I'll get it done real quick."

I headed to the specified location, let's do it, I thought motivated and stood on the field with the hoe I use in the【Atelier】.

I pierced the hoe into the ground that had weed growing up to my ankles, then fighting with heavy resistance I flipped the ground along with the grass roots.

"Ghh, as expected of soil that hasn't been cultivated by people before, it's hard.【Enchant】——Attack!"

In the middle of work I used the ATK stat enchant and continued doing the plane work.

From time to time I found potion

materials such as herbs and poisonous plants, detoxification grass mixed in together with weeds so the work extended as I collected those.

As expected, Ryui couldn't do anything to help out with the field, but Zakuro tried to help and continued to dig a hole in the corner of the field watched over by Ryui. Glancing sideways at that, I proceeded with work.

Finishing three fields took me longer than when I was looking for the lost child's parent.

——You completed the quest——

【Help With Farm Work】

When I reported completion of the

quest, the Farmer NPC looked at the field and nodded with satisfaction.

"You did well. Here, your pay. Also some fresh vegetables, take them."

I received a single Quest Chip and a basket with assortment of vegetables, then my back was strongly tapped.

I looked at the basket filled with carrots and onions, cabbage, potatoes and others and thought that they are great materials for making a pot-au-feu, that would warm me up and protect from【Cold Damage】. Personally, I thought this was quite tasty a quest.

"Now, let's finish one more quest and then start preparations for the other quests I picked up."

I raised up Zakuro who looked like he's gonna fall into the hole he dug by himself and moved in front of the quest board.

This time I headed to the quest board to the East and received the 【Rubble Removal】quest.

And, when I arrived in front of the pile of rubble I heard the details from the quest NPC.

"Hey, you came to help with rubble removal right? This work is more fit for a group of people, you sure you'll be okay?"

"For a group of people, meaning it's a quest for parties, huh?"

It should be fine if it's isn't too difficult, I thought and listened to the headband-wearing NPC's full explanation.

"We were building a building on master carpenter's orders, but we're having really hard time post-processing the rubble after demolition of the previous one. So, could you move the materials from here to the vacant land nearby? Also, burn the trash

that can't be used as materials."

Told so I looked towards the rubble of mountain and saw beams, brick, and well-shaped stones.

"If it's too hard for you alone, you can invite some more people. I will pay everyone's share. Well then, I leave the rest to you."

After saying so, the headband NPC left.

Left behind, I folded my arms in front of the pile of rubble and started thinking of what to do.

Moving gravel, stones, bricks and wood would be hard to do alone, impossible even.

That's why I applied strength-in-numbers tactics without involving other players, using items to do that.

"Come, there's work to do first time in a

while! —— 《Summon》!"

I summoned the synthetic mobs from the 【Nucleus Stones】 I made the other day with 【Synthesis】.

Aside from the Heat Gels I made as countermeasure against cold there were Aqua Gels, Earth Gels and wind element's Wind Gels to act as leaders of the gel troops.

Although basically they were just disposable slimes for acting as a living wall and stalling the enemy, the synthetic mobs have been helping me out in the 【Atelier】 for a long time now, and were simple workforce.

"Heat Gels, collect trash and incinerate it inside your bodies. Earth Gels, collect gravel and sand then transport it to the specified location. Other gels are to carry bricks and stones one by one, sort them in the vacant lot. Well then, begin!"

When I gave them simple instructions, the synthetic mobs started to move.

Just like when they were ploughing the【Atelier】fields, the earth element slimes swallowed sand and gravel inside their bodies leaving wood and bricks behind.

The slimes that carried bricks and sand have been going to and from the vacant lot.

Although bricks were messily stacked together, they could be properly distinguished from stones, stones were also placed in easy to distinguish place.

The slimes that were carrying gravel had entered the provided sand bags and discharged the gravel inside them before crawling out of the bag.

Also, slimes spat out bent nails into a small wooden box.

While the slimes worked, I focused on

the detailed work such as placing bricks in order, preparing new sand bags and tying the full ones.

Then as the mountain of rubble was gradually removed——

"Ohh, they were hidden beneath, but that's a big. These might be a little difficult."

Hidden beneath gravel, stones and bricks there were beams and columns.

How do I carry those, I wondered. Meanwhile, a group of slimes have started carrying a large rubble.

While I watched what are they trying to do, the big piece was lifted.

"WOAH?! No way, that's how they're gonna carry it?!"

Unable to believe my eyes, I saw multiple slimes lift up a large piece of rubble from below and move by rolling their gel-like

bodies.

Then once the slimes finished carrying it, they moved back to the demolished building, entered below rubble and started rolling again.

Worried about the slimes and possibility of them being crushed I watched them carry another piece safely.

In the end they carried a large beam, Heat Gels took in small remaining wood and wooden chips and burned them.

And thus, the strength-in-numbers plan using slimes was over.

During the work Zakuro caught small nails in his mouth and helped carrying them to the wooden box.

"I guess it's over? Cheers for good work —— 《Dismissal》 "

After I sorted out useful materials out of

the mountain of rubble I returned the summoned slimes to Nucleus Stones.

And, picking up the large number of Nucleus Stones was personally the hardest part of the entire job for me. After all, there were quite a few of them.

After the rubble removal work was finished I sat down at the edge of the vacant lot. Emily-san would have an easy time with this quest, I thought as I sipped tea.

A while after, the headband NPC returned.

"Wow, this is a surprise. How did you remove all the rubble in such a short period of time? Well, whatever. We can move onto dismantling another building now! Thanks, here's your reward."

——You completed the quest——

【Rubble Removal】

A message saying that appeared and I received a little generous amount of money from the NPC, as well as three Quest Chips.

The fact it was a higher amount then the one I saw on the quest board surprised me.

"That's more than the reward specified on the quest board."

"Oh, that's a reward each person gets when you finish it with a few people. Since you achieved it on your own we don't have to pay several people. That's why you get extra."

"So it's a bonus for completing the quest solo?"

I muttered to myself. So they added that too, I thought.

If I were to clear this quest all alone it might have taken me over three days. While thinking that I counted the chips I gathered so far. I had seven in total now.

I decided that tomorrow I won't be taking any new quests, instead I'll focus on preparing for delivery quests.

On a side note, my rubble removal work using slimes was seen by multiple players who had taken screenshots and videos of it.

The slimes working were evaluated as cute, the troublesome rubble removal quest was also re-evaluated seeing as one could it solo by using synthetic mobs. However, I wasn't aware of such things happening.

Chapter 3

Cold Resistance Material and the Mimicry Turtle

One day after completing the【Rubble Removal】and【Help With Farm Work】quests.

When I opened the door between the chilly workshop and store part of the【Atelier】, the hot air coming from the stove placed in the store had flowed into the workshop.

"Well then, I need to stew the chopped vegetables in the large pot and take out scum, then put in sausages and bacon to get a consommé stock."

While making a pot-au-feu with assortment of vegetables I received as a quest reward I prepared for delivery-type quests.

I placed the pot with hot water on top of a Magic Stove and put vegetables inside it, meanwhile, I prepared potions inside the usual cauldron I had inside the workshop.

"Using the materials I acquired during farm work I can prepare the required number of Potions, what's left is High Potions and MP Potions, as well as few types of bad status antidotes."

The quests I checked in advance required crafting of Potions, High Potions, MP Potions, various bad status antidotes and arrows. There were also material delivery quests for materials such as herbs, Iron Ore, fur and others. So I prepared all those items.

Those quests were aimed at the beginners so their degree of difficulty wasn't high, thus I could clear them just by retrieving items I had in the【Atelier】.

However...

"Ah, I don't have enough of drop items I don't normally use."

The delivery-type quests required players to bring 20 or more pieces of an item, so I might not have enough of some items I only had samples of.

Moreover the timing of the discovery was really bad, since I changed the Iron Ore to Fine Iron Ore and Iron Ingots just recently and didn't have enough.

While I considered the arrangements for the delivery quests I mixed the pot-au-feu boiled on low heat to make sure it doesn't boil out, and prepared the potions for delivery in parallel.

Since I was used to working in parallel on crafting potions in cooking, I did that while humming.

The scent of consommé started drift around the workshop. Lured by that

appetizing smell Ryui who was gnawing on a carrot I gave him beforehand, and Zakuro who was grooming his tails by licking, started lurking around me displaying hunger.

"Wait a little longer. I'll finish pot-au-feu soon."

As I waited for the vegetable to cook thoroughly, I poured the potion into bottles one by one.

I finished crafting potions and decreased the flame under the pot to make it only warm.

"Well, it should be edible. Though I have some more work to do."

I moved from the workshop to the store section of the 【Atelier】 to check on the product stock and whether there is a need to replenish something."

And when I looked through the window to check whether there are any changes on the herb farm, cold air had crept up my legs.

Feeling the cold I naturally turned towards the entrance.

"Uuuh, it's soo cold! H-hello, Y-Yun-san."

"Good day, Yun-san. You seem free now."

The ones who came to the 【Atelier】 were the twins, spear-using girl Lyna and the mage Al.

"What's up with that assertive question. Well, I am."

"Ahh, so warm. This store is sooo warm!"

Lyna who was rubbing her chilly arms had stretched her body.

Then seeing warm Ryui and Zakuro, she started walking towards them. Seeing that

Al and I smiled wryly.

However, Ryui and Zakuro ran away from Lyna leaving her with a depressed look and forcing her to change her goal towards the stove.

"Al, I see you aren't with Letia today."

"Yes. We aren't playing together too much during the event period."

"Letia-san is cooperating with people from medium and small guilds to clear some quests! We can't lose to her either!"

Together with Al we looked dubiously towards Lyna who raised an energetic voice as she clung to the stove.

Speaking of which, Lyna was still wearing the same cold-looking leather armour as usual, but Al's equipment was a robe that had some extra lining that used material that stopped air from passing so he didn't

look that cold.

"Did you get new armour, Al?"

"Yes! I did! When I heard about【Cold Damage】implementation I requested it and it was done just recently."

Ehehe, his cheeks went loose as he laughed. Seeing that Lyna stared at him reproachfully without moving away from the stove.

"It's not fair only Al's got it! Why am I the only one to be cold?!"

"That's because you reap what you sow."

"Did Lyna mess something up?"

"What?! Don't treat me like a troublemaker!"

Lyna got all angry, but knowing that she was a little short-sighted I thought that couldn't be helped.

"Well, calm down. I was about to finish making something that'll warm you up. I'll listen to you as we eat."

I moved the still-warm pot to the store part's counter and treated the two with pot-au-feu.

I also put a little of soup on shallow dishes for Ryui and Zakuro to lick and added plenty of cut vegetables, bacon and sausage to it.

Ryui started by eating the carrots and drinking soup, Zakuro put hot and steaming potatoes in his mouth.

And, together with Lyna and Al I scooped the soup and vegetables with a spoon to put in our mouths.

"Haa, I can feel the warmth course in my body. I'd like Letia-san to have some too."

"You're right. It's warm and to us, who

came from the cold it's really reassuring."

When the two squinted and exhaled happily I asked again.

"So, what did you want from me?"

"Oh right! Yun-san! Do you have any other items for countering the cold?!"

Lyna jumped straight to the point.

I turned towards Al seeking detailed explanation. He nodded in response and started talking.

"Actually, Lyn-chan cleared a potion delivery quest."

"It's a simple quest where you just deliver items, right? And she cleared it too, so what's the problem?"

"What if I said that the reselling guilds are involved and the prices went up?"

While saying so, Al glanced towards Lyna, who overwhelmed by his gaze had leaned backwards.

In other words, the demand for potions increased because of the delivery quests and then further increased because of reselling guilds.

So Lyna didn't analyse the situation and invested the money she had on a potion spree, then after clearing the quest she was out of funds.

"Good grief... 【Atelier】 has a limit on the number sold every day but it's cheap, you could just have waited for a few days."

"I told her the same, but she didn't listen to me and bought potions at rip-off price. As a result, she ended up with no money for winter equipment."

Seeing Al heave a sigh I thought that he sure has a lot on his plate.

"Uuuhh, I am reflecting on that! But what's done is done!"

"So you can't afford winter equipment, instead you want some cheap items for cold protection to take their place..."

"Yup! That's it! I thought Yun-san will surely have some useful item like that!"

I heaved a sigh and started cleaning up dishes after the two finished eating the pot-au-feu.

"Still, my place is supposed to be a place that deals with potion and other consumables."

I said and lined up several items on the table.

"From the right, Element Cream, 【Water Increase】 accessory and Heat Gel's Nucleus Stone."

"How much do they cost?"

"Element Cream is 200kG, accessories are from 70kG to 150kG. Heat Gel's Nucleus Stone is 100kG each."

The Element Cream's effect lasted for several hours, the fire element and heat resistance cream was purchased for Volcano Area's adventuring and the water element and cold resistance cream was purchased as cold countermeasure.

Although I sold them for a bit high 200kG each because of rare materials, the sales were great.

The various cold resistance accessories that cost 150kG were something I made recently by using various materials.

The 70kG ones were accessories I made a long time ago and was experimenting with additional effects. Their cold resistance effect was weak and since they were just prototypes from when I made the concept, they weren't adjusted for the player

purchasing them. Well, they were just samples so they could be adjusted for new players.

Lastly, the Heat Gel's Nucleus Stones were something I made to be used instead of a hot water bottles and cost 100kG, including the materials used.

When I explained this in order, Lyna who had a joyful expression when I was taking those out, slowly changed her expression to a cloudy one.

"I-it's all too expensive!"

"Are you that broke?"

"I'd like something for 2000G, even if the effect lasts short!"

"Lyn-chan, you're aiming too low. Also, these prices are that of a High Potion."

The fact the two just stopped being using beginner potions recently didn't mean they

can afford these. They would like some inexpensive cold resistance-raising items that had a shorter duration.

"Well, I guess this counts like supporting players, I guess I should do something about it."

The items I lined up on the table were originally made for a different use and their secondary effect happened to be cold resistance increase. In which case, making items that were intended to have cold resistance effect from the get-go would be good.

"So, so?! Will you make some cheap items soon?!"

"Since you two were the ones who came with it, help me out."

"Ehhh?! Why me too?"

"You're helping out too, Al! Cuz' we share

our destiny here!"

My remark ended up including Al, but in case of Lyna it's better to have him accompany her.

Well, when I thought of what could be used, it seemed like I could make something with the heat resistance and cold resistance materials I already had.

Lyna and Al also started considering it while growling, but that soon stopped.

"I tried thinking of something, but no idea of cold resistance item comes to my mind. I mean, there's lots of ways of fighting against cold."

Just as Lyna said, one could fight against cold and heat by increasing DEF stat and increasing the resistance, as well as adapting their equipment.

Other than that, there were heat sources

like my Heat Gels, Magi-san's tamed mob Rickle emitted cold air so it cooled people off. There was a big difference just by having such existences close.

"How about thinking from the opposite direction, Lyn-chan? We do know a player who's not bothered by cold."

"Ehh?! Who's that?! Don't beat around the bush and say it Al!"

"——It's Letia-san. Aside from the minimal expanses on armour and consumables, that person throws all her money on food."

Letia's same as usual, ain't she. I thought, but what Al said was interesting.

"In other words, among the food Letia eats there's an item that gives her resistance to cold, is what you're saying?"

"I think so."

According to Al's hypothesis, there's something that has an effect of increasing cold resistance among the food Letia eats.

Food can have effect of temporarily

increasing player's stats, so that wouldn't be too strange.

"Speaking of which, recently when I saw Letia-san go to a cold area, I saw her chew on something that looked like a tree root."

"And I remember her munching on some leaves when she was going to a hot area."

"Let's investigate then."

If those food items were to increase heat and cold resistance, there was a high possibility of making them into some kind of potion.

"I saw them before, I remember where you can get those materials!"

"Umm, if I'm not wrong, the place we know is the forest to the side of the road leading up to the Second Town, right before it. You can get vegetables and wild fruits in there so Letia-san often goes there

to pick some."

"Let's go there right away!"

"Waaait. It's not the time to immediately go and look for it."

"That's right Lyn-chan. There's also Yun-san's convenience."

Together with Al we stopped Lyna from going out of control.

Lyna was a little dissatisfied, but sat down on the chair again.

"Is that somewhere near the【Horia Cave】?"

Asking the two for more details I tried to learn approximately where was it.

"No. It's the other branching in front of it. A little further ahead of where Fairy Panthers and Furball Demons appear."

I did walk around that area looking for materials, but I didn't remember seeing anything that resembled what they described.

I haven't searched that area since then, so there was a possibility I overlooked it.

"In that case, how about we meet at four o'clock in the afternoon tomorrow? If we log in after school we will have time until dinner."

"Understood. Then..."

Lyna consented on the meeting time, Al also nodded.

Then, Lyna looked outside the window at the scenery filled with chilly wind.

"It's cold so can I stay here until the tomorrow's meet-up?"

"Of course not. Hurry up home."

After I answered bluntly, Lyna and Al logged out on spot.

The next time they log in will most likely be in front of the portal of the town they registered as their base.

●

Next day. When I came home from school Miu was already home and logged into OSO.

Apparently for the last few days she has been clearing quests at furious speed. On breakfasts and dinner she reported in detail what quests she had done.

Takumi too, had spoke of similar things during the breaks in the school.

And when I told the two that I continue to do the errand-type quests that had poor

efficiency, they advised me to do the subjugation and material collection quests.

Well, listening to them was slightly annoying, but I also heard some useful information.

"Now, let's log in."

After changing clothes I checked the remaining time until the meeting tune we decided on, and logged in.

Then along with some light-headedness I landed in the workshop section of the【Atelier】. Inside of the stone workshop was cold, really cold.

In order to escape this place which was colder than the outside because the windows were closed, I quickly moved to the store section.

In the store section Lyna and Al were already waiting while drinking the tea

Kyouko-san the NPC brewed them.

"So you're already here, that's early."

After seeing me come Lyna drank the tea at once and stood up.

"Now, let's form a party and go!"

"Oh Lyn-chan, calm down a little."

Al rebuked her with his usual tone and turned towards me.

"We finished our preparations, how about Yun-san?"

"There's one place I want to go to before we go, is that all right?"

When I asked the two, they nodded mystified.

It seemed like they thought we'd go straight towards our goal, so they were disappointed.

"It would be a waste to only go look for materials, right? Let's get some quests before going."

"Ah, you're right! That sounds good!"

Lyna, who had completely forgot about the event agreed with a loud voice.

"Well then, let's go. Oh right, before that. Ryui, Zakuro—— 《Summon》."

I called out the tamed mobs Ryui and Zakuro before we left the【Atelier】.

The first place we headed to was the Eastern quest board.

There we have seen several parties look up the quest board to select quests. I took some quests whose paper had colour indicating they were already completed.

——You received the quest——

【Fur Delivery】

Completion criteria:
Deliver 60 fur-type items to NPC Tom the Clothier.

Reward:
5000G
1 Quest Chip for each member of the party

"All right, this one's first."

"First, you say. Are we going to take more quests? Going to other quest boards is a pain in the ass."

"Well, I'll explain as we move."

Appeasing Lyna who complained I entered a back road and spoke to a bearded old man NPC.

"At this time of the year as winter comes, the Furball Demons turn into Snowfur

Demons. It's said that their decorations made with their hair bring good health. Can you collect some Snowfur Demon's fur for me?"

——You received the quest——

【Gather Decoration Materials】

Completion criteria:
Gather 15 of the quest item【Snow White Demon Fur】.

Reward:
5000G
3 Quest Chips

"If we beat the Furball Demons we'll get both fur-type materials and the quest items so we will be able to do two quests at once. Well, we can go now."

""Wait, waait, wait a second!""

"Mm? What is it?"

I turned around to Lyna and Al who tried to stop me in a hurry, but I didn't stop moving towards the portal's transition object.

"What was that?! Ehh?! Are the hidden quests not listed on the quest board that easy to find?"

"We received a quest directly from the NPC, right? So, Yun-san knew about that hidden quest?!"

Is that really this surprising? I thought seeing the confused two and waited for them to settle down.

Once they calmed down after taking some deep breaths I started explaining.

"Yun-san, why do you know that hidden quest?"

I've been going around speaking with NPCs and to my surprise, I experienced that they're likely to drop some hints on hidden quests, I thought and smiled wryly in my mind.

"Somehow it seems like there's a big difference in information on the event we have and the information Yun-san has, so we would like an explanation."

"Got it. But much of what I'll say will be second hand knowledge, okay?"

"Skip the prelude, just tell us!"

"That's right! Stop putting on airs."

"Geez, calm down a little, haa, ehem——so then."

As the two hurried me up, I rebuked them and after a cough I started telling them what I know.

"There are two types of quests on the

quest board. Single quests and chain quests."

"Taking that literally, single quests would be normal quests, and chain quests would be those that start a chain of quests, right?"

"That's right. The number of chain quests is undetermined and their difficulty differs."

"Then how do you discern those?"

The method to discern them was very simple.

"By colour of the paper on the quest board."

"Paper's colour differentiates the completed and not yet completed quests, right?"

"Yup. White aren't completed yet, red were already completed. They turn red if all quests associated with the chain quest

are completed, but if only some of them were completed, they're shown as yellow pieces of paper."

"Then the quest Yun-san received directly from the NPC wasn't a hidden quest, but a chain quest that wasn't fully completed yet?"

I shook my head in response to Al's question.

"That one's a hidden quest. You receive it the same way as you do normal quests, by talking with the NPCs. It's easy to miss if you rely on the quest board."

"Hmmm. So you searched thoroughly by talking with every NPC."

"No, I got information from the old womens' NPC network."

When I explained to the two about the old women's network, the two looked at me

coldly as if to say "what is this person doing?", so I cleared my throat to change the atmosphere.

"Ehem. If you talk to certain NPCs and follow up on their responses you can find the quest NPCs. They aren't really hidden. Anyway, it's a bit of a hassle to walk around and talk to NPCs, there are some quests like this one that have good rewards."

"Good rewards? The reward this time isn't that good..."

Well, the quests 【Fur Delivery】 and 【Gather Decoration Materials】 didn't seem to different, but the details of the rewards differed.

"There's a big difference in the rewards part, right? One quest chip each for each player in the party and three chips to share between the party members, is that big difference."

"Ah, you're right!"

The one who noticed it earlier was Al. As expected, he thinks quickly.

"There's a huge difference when it comes to reward per player depending on whether you do it alone or in a party!"

"What does that mean?"

Lyna asked displeased after hearing Al's answer, so he explained in more detail.

"The first quest we received, 【Fur Delivery】 give one quest chip per person whether it's a six member party or a three member party like ours."

"You're right. But if we gather the materials for the 【Gather Decoration Materials】 quest, we'll get 3 quest chips for three people. One each. Aren't both rewards the same?"

"That's the case if it's three people! But

【Fur Delivery】 requires 60 pieces of fur whether it's full party or solo. 10 pieces each for party of six, 60 pieces for solo. The number of pieces you have together changes too drastically and yet you still get one quest chip. But 【Gather Decoration Materials】 quest is quite doable alone and gives you three quest chips."

"Eh, then 【Gather Decoration Materials】 can be done solo?! Let's disband the party now——"Calm down, Lyn-chan."—Woah, what's it?"

Seeing Lyna and Al's exchange I forced myself not to laugh.

"Ah, but but, the total is..."

"Lyn-chan, would you choose to clear the quest easily or to get more quest chips?"

"Uuh, uuuhhh, uggrahhhh! I don't care, let's go as we are!"

The moment Lyna gave up on thinking, I reached the point where I was no longer able to bear the laughter.

"Kuku-ahahaha, no need to think so deeply on it."

"Really, if not for Yun-san bringing up such mean subject, I wouldn't have to think about it!"

"Don't get so angry. This is one of the criteria for choosing a quest reward."

Some quests differ in degree of difficulty depending on the way you challenge them.

The easiest to understand example are raid quests.

The reward for this large quest shared between six parties of six people totalling thirty-six members is astounding number of 400 Quest Chips.

If completed with a full raid of thirty-six

members the reward for each person is Twelve quest Chips.

If completed with half the raid the amount of chips is doubled, but the difficulty degree goes up.

Thinking of the correlation between the difficulty degree and the number of participants for the quest, it's best for everyone to look for quests suitable for them.

I explained that to Lyna and Al.

"That's why there's a need to pay attention to such things. By the way, this time I looked into a quest that allowed us to collect the materials for heat and cold resistance at the same time."

The【Fur Delivery】and【Gather Decoration Materials】quests could be done while collecting the materials, in a location of that difficulty we would lose

some time so I made it that we use that time to get high reward.

"Look, there are the Furball Demons and Snowfur Demons, go fight them."

"Go fight them you say, what about Yun-san?"

"I'll cover you with arrows and enchants if it get's dangerous, but I'll focus on collecting materials."

Although it seemed like they'll complain about rough handling, I ignored that and headed to a place where a herb-based item caught my eye and also started collecting ore from a mining point.

"There's lots of them but they're weaklings! Let's go, Al!"

"Yup! Let's show Yun-san how much we grew!"

After saying so, Lyna and Al attacked a

group of furball and snowfur demons.

I paid attention to the two as I gathered materials.

A while later Lyna had used a shield-type hate gathering Sense which resulted with too large number of mobs for the two to beat, so I stealthily regulated their numbers with arrows.

We were still a slight distance away from the materials Lyna and Al spoke of, but before arriving there we might finish gathering the two quests and also get some other delivery quests' items.

●

"*huff* *huff*, we gathered too many enemies at once. That was hard."

"I ran out of MP mid-fight and thought

it's over."

"Well then, rest a for a moment."

Completely exhausted, Lyna and Al rested in the nearby safety area.

In the middle of combat it started getting dangerous for the two so I supported them with potions and enchants. It seems like they were fed up with the large amount of weak mobs.

"The loot we got just now is 53 pieces of fur and 8 pieces of【Snow White Demon Fur】in total. I'll go get the rest."

With that said, I passed the two some snacks and warm tea before going out to search the surrounding area by myself.

If I beat seven of Furball Demons and Snowfur Demons each we would complete the two quests' criteria so I walked through the area quite eagerly.

But our first goal, the materials that had heat and cold resistance were yet to be found.

"Why can't I find the materials I look for, instead I get lots of enemies of low importance?"

I muttered as I stared with【Sky Eyes】at a mob visible between trees.

I saw a single Snowfur Demon on the other side of the forest.

They were another version of Furball Demons that received minor changes and were a little stronger. I nocked an arrow and shot it.

The arrow passed through the trees and pierced the small body covered with white hair.

Blown away by the momentum of the arrow the Snowfur Demon bounced three

times on the ground like a ball, rolled, and turned into particles of light.

After that I beat the Snowfur Demons with one shot each, making it five in total.

"Why am I finding this many Snowfur Demons?"

At this rate we would finish the two quests first, I thought while looking around. That's when Ryui whom I brought together with me pulled the hem of my clothes, and Zakuro had led me to some place.

"What is it? Is there something over there?"

Ahead of where Ryui and Zakuro led me to, there was open space in the centre of which there was a large mob mimicking a rock.

"A turtle-type mob, huh. And it seems like there's a reaction of a collection point

beneath it."

The turtle mob, 【Mimicry Turtle】 affixed itself to the ground as if to protect the collection point.

I tried changing around several Senses to check on it, and it turned out that it had a high level of 【Recognition Inhibition】 effect allowing it to erase its presence and blend with the surroundings.

That's was why I was previously unable to find the Mimicry Turtle with a lower level of 【See-Through】.

"So, can I do it now?"

I sorted out my Senses once again, and started preparations to beat it from a distance.

【Bow Lv49】
【Longbow Lv28】
【Sky Eyes Lv13】
【Swiftness Lv18】
【See-Through Lv22】
【Sorcery Lv16】
【Enchant Arts Lv39】
【Earth Element Talent Lv29】
【Taming Lv19】
【Cook Lv15】

Unequipped:

【Dosing Master Lv3】
【Alchemy Lv44】
【Synthesis Lv44】
【Crafter's Knowledge Lv3】
【Engraving Lv25】
【Swimming Lv15】
【Linguistics Lv24】
【Climbing Lv21】
【Bodily Resistance Lv3】
【Spiritual Resistance Lv1】

"Now, let's go. 《Enchant》——Attack, defence, speed!"

I applied triple enchant on myself to start with.

"Since I don't know what element this guy's weak to, this time I'll go without 《Element Enchant》. ——《Ingredient Knowledge》!"

The enemy's weakness marker blinked, I invoked the 【Cooking】 skill that increased the amount of damage dealt ot that point.

"Next, let's weaken the enemy with 《Cursed》——defence!"

I lowered the Mimicry Turtle's defence using cursed, making it easier for my attacks to go through.

With that, the preparations were complete.

"All right. ——《Bow Skill - Arrow Stitching》!"

The arrow released from the string flew straight at the Mimicry Turtle.

I aimed for the gap between the rock-like shell and the neck, which was the location indicated by《Ingredient Knowledge》.

Even the Killer Mantis was unable to block this attack with its defensive posture ——but the Mimicry Turtle endured it.

"...Seriously? It's supposed to be my strongest attack."

I muttered and scratched my head wondering on how to get the turtle out of the way.

Although I said strongest attack, it was my strongest normal attack.

If I used attack items such as【Magic Gems】I could add a chain bonus damage

by increasing the amount, but since I used a lot of them on the other day when I was running through mobs with Lyly, I didn't have much on me.

"But it looks like it properly received damage."

The Mimicry Turtle wasn't intact and had received little damage. When it received damage it shivered slightly before stopping its movements again after a while, stuck in the same place again.

"Heck, while I watched that his HP recovered."

I went to great lengths to deliver a powerful blow to it, but the automatic HP recovery had already restored the damage.

"Haa, can't be helped. Let's go back to Lyna and Al, consult this with them first."

If I show them this place they might

remember and provide me some information.

When thinking so I returned to the safety area, I saw the two have finished their break and were doing some light fur farming nearby.

"Ah, Yun-san. Welcome back."

"Welcome back, we gathered 3 pieces of【Snow White Demon Fur】."

"I acquired some as well so if we put it together we should have enough to complete the two quests."

As I said so, Lyna happily made a guts pose and Al exhaled with relief.

"Just earlier, when I was searching nearby I found something. I want you to take a look at it."

""Something you want us to take a look at?""

The two tilted their heads in puzzlement in the same manner, making me put on a faint smile before I guided them to the location I was in previously.

The Mimicry Turtle was unchanged from when I saw it earlier and continued to mimic a rock.

"There's a collection point beneath that rock. That's why I think it's suspicious. Did you hear anything like that from Letia?"

I'd be grateful if they knew something about how to defeat or chase away the Mimicry Turtle.

Thinking so, I directed my gaze towards Lyna and Al who were pondering with their arms folded.

"What the heck is this? Just a rock?"

Lyna said and not having any Sense like【See-Through】she carelessly

approached the rock, the moment she tried to touch the Mimicry Turtle——

"Woah?! Something came out!"

A head had extended from inside the rock and with a slow movement it tried to bite Lyna's hand but because of how slow it was, she could easily avoid it.

"This thing is super tough. I'm wondering on how could we get rid of it."

"Tell me that earlier!"

"It's no good, I don't remember anything about it."

"So, what do we do?"

How do I get to the collection point beneath the Mimicry Turtle... while I wondered, Lyna raised her short spear and moved around to the mob's side.

"Obviously, we just need to attack and

beat it!"

While Al and I hesitated whether to stop her, Lyna attacked the Mimicry Turtle.

"Take thaaaattt! Dieee, c'monn!"

Swinging her short spear she continued to hit the rock-like shell.

Al shrugged and created a bullet of flame with fire element magic he used to attack the turtle.

I guess we can join her until she's bored, I thought and repeating preparations from before I shot the 《Bow Skill - Arrow Stitching》 Art.

Receiving attacks from all three of us, the Mimicry Turtle retracted its limbs completely to take defensive posture.

Lyna and Al's attacks didn't do any damage at all, but some of my attacks slightly decreased the turtle's HP. However,

while I drank an MP Potion to recover MP, it recovered automatically.

"Haa, haa... why do we deal no damage despite us attacking it all the time?"

"Lyn-chan, it just means that he has real high defence. Phew, I'm tired."

First one to feel vanity after attacking the enemy who doesn't receive damage was Al, who stopped from exhaustion, and then Lyna who tired herself out to the point where she could no longer swing her spear.

As for me——

"Ah, this might be unexpectedly good for leveling【Bow】Sense."

I muttered as I continued to shoot arrows without end.

By attacking the enemy with much higher defence than my attacks could go through, I gradually accumulated combat-

type Sense experience value. It seemed like there was more experience than from beating large numbers of weak mobs, but less than from beating strong boss mobs.

After I shot a few dozens of Arts my【Bow】Sense went up by 1 and reached the big breakpoint of 50. And, I saw a new【Magic Bow】Sense derivation field added which I took without any hesitation.

Possessed SP47

【Magic Bow Lv1】
【Longbow Lv30】
【Sky Eyes Lv13】
【Swiftness Lv18】
【See-Through Lv23】
【Sorcery Lv17】
【Enchant Arts Lv40】
【Earth Element Talent Lv29】
【Taming Lv19】

【Cook Lv15】

Unequipped:

【Bow Lv50】
【Dosing Master Lv3】
【Alchemy Lv44】
【Synthesis Lv44】
【Crafter's Knowledge Lv3】
【Engraving Lv25】
【Swimming Lv15】
【Linguistics Lv24】
【Climbing Lv21】
【Bodily Resistance Lv3】
【Spiritual Resistance Lv1】

After I unequipped the 【Bow】 Sense and replaced it with the newly acquired 【Magic Bow】 my attacks were——

"...The attack power decreased, eh. Well, it can't be helped since it's on level 1."

Maybe I'll be able to beat the Mimicry Turtle with the new Sense, I thought, but that thinking was naive.

"Hey, Yun-san. Isn't it about time we give up?'

"Can this thing really be beaten? Isn't there a possibility that the place Letia-san found is elsewhere?"

Lyna and Al already gave up and had no motivation to continue.

I was also near giving up, but if we don't find what we're looking for we will be out of time for today. Thinking so I tried to challenge it one last time.

"Sorry. This will be the last try."

I said and took out a shovel from the inventory, moved closer to the Mimicry Turtle. I scooped some earth aside from between the Mimicry Turtle's shell and the

ground, then put my hand inside.

"Are you trying to lift it up? No way that'll work."

"I'm not as dumb as to do that. For now, there's nothing to lose trying—— 《Clay Shield》 "

A wall of earth grew from below the mob.

I made it appear as to hook up edge of the turtle's carapace.

It would be great if this we could topple over the Mimicry Turtle, while I thought that the earthen caught on the edge of turtle's shell as it grew. Once the wall was finished, one side of the turtle was raised and it stood tilted on the side. It was impossible to topple over the turtle, but we revealed the collection point below it.

That's when I received a painful gazes from Lyna and Al, which said "if you had a

method like this, you should have used it right from the start".

"N-now, you two hurry and collect the items below."

"Eh?!! No way! We have no idea when will it fall down. C'mon Al, go do it!"

"I'm not doing it! Look! The turtle is wobbling, it's too dangerous!"

The Mimicry Turtle must have noticed it had its shell raised up on one side as it extended its head, and short limbs and flapped with them slowly.

It's really cute how it slowly moves its limbs, I thought, but seeing as the earthen wall started to crack I had no time to dwell on that.

"Geh, it's falling over! It's dangerous so I'm outta here!"

"Ah?!! Lyn-chan don't leave me!"

"Hey, don't leave me while I'm lifting it up with magic!"

The cracks on the earthen wall gradually grew and it had become unable to support the turtle any longer.

And when I thought it's over and turned around on my heels to follow after Lyna and Al——

Along with a heavy sound like that of a falling rock, strong pressure had pressed against my back and pushed me forward making me fall headlong on the ground.

"Yun-san, are you all right?"

"I was only covered with earth, so I'm fine."

Lyna and Al who hid in the shade of nearby trees peeked my way fearfully, so I waved my hand above the pile of soil.

"KYUOON"

On the other other hand, the Mimicry Turtle who returned to its original posture after impact had raised a cry and started to slowly move away revealing the collection point.

I stood up and shook off the dirt from my body and stared at the collection point that was hidden beneath the turtle.

"Whitish sterns and leaves, and yellow roots?"

I pulled out the plant that had near-white sterns and leaves. The roots covered with soil had a yellowish colour.

"Ah, it looks like the ingredients Letia-san was eating, so that was it."

"Al, this one too."

I expected the cold and heat resistance materials to be separate items, but to my surprise it was the same plant.

It seems like it was called Hakuga.

The Mimicry Turtle who hit us with the strong impact turned around and started to slowly dig out the Hakuga from the ground and eat it.

"This is bad! Lyna, Al, let's gather as many samples as possible!"

""Roger!""

We were able to gather about a third of the ingredients in the collection spot before Mimicry Turtle finished eating

When the turtle finished digging out about half of the plants, it returned to the previous posture to protect the collection point.

"We found a real weird mob, but we accomplished our goal."

"I didn't intend to force myself this much, I'm tired now. But if it's possible to

make cheap cold-resistance items with this, it'll be easier to play in cold areas."

"Lyn-chan, we still haven't confirmed it can be made."

Al tried to bring Lyna back to reality, but there wasn't much feeling in his voice. Lyna had no energy to refute to Al either.

"Well then, let's try it out right away. Ryui, could you?"

When I called Ryui who - before I realized - took Zakuro and hid themselves with illusion, he cancelled the illusion and snuggled up to me.

I asked Ryui to bring out some water and washed away the dirt and soil from myself and the Hakuga. Then I took out the kitchen knife I had at my belt, cut off a piece and ate it.

"Ohh, I see."

"Yun-san is quite a challenger to try eating it right away."

"Want to eat some, Al?"

"No, I'll pass. So, did you find out something?"

Al refused to take one of the leaves I extended to him, and asked a question instead.

"Certainly, leaves have a heat resistance effect and the roots have cold resistance effect, but they have a short duration of five minutes."

It would be hard to use unless I increased the duration from three to six times longer.

If it was to be used as is, it would have been chewed in mouth all the time like a gum, but the taste is a problem.

"The root is spicy. Leaves make you feel cool and cold."

Although leaves exerted a heat resistance effect the moment I put it in my mouth, at the same time I felt like it affected my invisible stats as I felt a little chilly, started trembling, forcing me to rub my arms lightly.

"But well, I understand how it's used now."

"All right, we've done what we came for, let's go back now!"

"We will leave all the Hakuga material with Yun-san, but when will there be some result?"

"Well, I'll try to make something out of it tomorrow."

In order not to let anyone notice that I feel cold I hugged Zakuro and returned together with the twins to the Second Town.

After reporting to the Quest NPC and distributing other collected materials I split up with Lyna and Al, returning to the【Atelier】.

By putting the materials in my mouth and experiencing what happens, I had an idea on how to craft the items with it.

After returning to the【Atelier】I immediately prepared the materials necessary for making cold and heat resistance items and went offline since it was late.

●

And on the next day in the【Atelier】——

"Yun-san, please show us the potions you made with the materials from yesterday!

Relieve me of this cold!"

"Lyn-chan, can't you buy some weak winter equipment with the reward for yesterday's quest?"

Al stared intently at Lyna.

I poured the two kinds of liquids into cups, I spent a day and a night to make them using Hakuga as material.

"Here, the reddish-brown has cold resistance effect, the cyan one has heat resistance effect."

"This, right! Let's drink the cold resistance potion right away!"

Despite the energetic declaration, Lyna drank the steaming reddish-brown liquid little by little. Meanwhile Al tried drinking some of the cyan drink.

"Phew, so this is the cold resistance potion! Somehow it warms me up starting

from my stomach! In my status it also says the【Cold Resistance Effect】lasts for 25 minutes."

"I drank the heat resistance potion, but I started feeling cold instead. Since I feel too cold now, I'd like a cold resistance potion now."

Seeing the two drink the liquids I gave them I suppressed my laughter.

And once the two started looking puzzled over the fact I was smiling, I told them that this wasn't a potion.

"You see, actually. This liquid isn't classified as a potion made with the【Dosing】Sense."

"Eh? But it has an extended effect."

"Well, I'll demonstrate how does it work."

I said and took out processed Hakuga and two teapots.

I split Hakuga into roots and leaves.

First, I put a spoonful of ground roots into a teapot, added some of 【Fairy Village's Honey Crown】 and poured hot water to cook it together.

As for the other teapot, I put in dried leaves minced with scissors, poured in boiling water and put in a few slices of lemons.

Then poured the two liquids I made into the twins' cups.

"As you can see, they're items made with 【Cooking】 Sense. To be precise rather than potion, it's more of a drink, I guess?"

The easy to handle and make ginger tea-like drink 【Hot Drink】 that granted cold resistance, and the peppermint-like herbal tea 【Cold Drink】 that granted heat resistance were completed.

Also, Hakuga roots could be used instead of ginger and the leaves could be used instead of mint, so I expect that if they're commercialized, plenty of cuisine granting cold and heat resistance will appear.

"But it has to be commercialized, right? Is it possible?"

"Actually you can get Hakuga seeds by using【Alchemy】Sense, so I'm trying to grow them in a planter."

Other than that, Hakuga could be grown by planting the roots directly in the ground, which made it a really mysterious plant.

A plant that was a combination of ginger and mint. Moreover, it was tastier than what NPCs were selling. This is truly fantasy.

In fact, I gathered the information about those plants and wrote them down on

paper.

"Well, based on all this I want to consult you two on something——"

I consulted with the two on a certain thing.

Chapter 4
Information Trade and the Stable

I consulted something with Lyna and Al. What we spoke about was——selling information on Hakuga plant.

Not only the useful items themselves, but also information about them might be purchased by crafters.

For example, information about my【Enchant Arts】Sense's skills【Item Enchant】and【Skill Enchant】as well as about items made by them, were evaluated by Magi-san and others to be worth 3m.

On the other hand, the【Synthesis】and【Alchemy】recipe for【Metal Thread】Emily-san and I devised is kept secret by us thanks to which we can make higher profits, but if we decided to sell it there definitely would be people who would like

to purchase.

And so, I consulted with the two on whether we could sell information on the Hakuga ingredient. As a result——

"We aren't the first ones to discover it. We've seen what Letia-san was eating, that's all."

"I guess. That's why in case we sell it, we'll include her in the share."

Hearing that, I blinked for a moment, before long my expression softened.

"Yeah, you're right. Then it'll be split between two of you and Letia then."

"Why aren't you included in that, Yun-san? Aren't you the one who used the【Cooking】 Sense to make recipe and found how to cultivate it?"

"That's right, it wasn't discovered by just us."

What Lyna and Al said was natural, but I would never agree on that.

"I'm don't really have any big problems with money that would make me want to take my share, so you two should have it. Also, even though I have information about Hakuga ingredient, I don't intend on continuing to sell【Hot Drinks】because of their poor effectiveness."

I told the two that right from the start I intended to leave the continuous availability of modestly-effective, inexpensive cold-resistance items to other players.

If crafters trade【Hot Drink】recipe amongst each other the items themselves would naturally become affordable and the demand saturated.

"Also, being able to acquire seeds for this plant is a big thing to me as well. More importantly, confirm this with Letia

through in-game call."

While I looked sideways at Lyna and Al as they contacted Letia-san for confirmation, I wondered what should I make with this ginger-ish luxurious ingredient.

Grilled pork with ginger, or maybe young chicken with ginger, dumplings, it would be also good to make a boiled fish with it.

Meanwhile, as I concentrated my thoughts on cooking fantasies, Lyna and Al have finished contacting Letia-san.

"Letia-san said that she leaves it all to us. Also, she said she'll be in the guild home today so you should visit. ——Still, do you need any help with that information selling, Yun-san?"

"Personally, we're worried we will sell it to cheaply without Letia-san with us."

"It's all right. I know a strange, but trusty guy. I also have something to do there so I'll go with you."

I said and taking the two, I left the【Atelier】and headed to the store of the person who would buy information.

And we have arrived at the——

"This place! It's the fancy café【Commonest Café & Clothier】!"

"The Western confectionery that has prices far beyond our reach! Since Letia-san prefers quantity over quality we haven't been able to visit it, the store we longed for!"

The two looked at the store with sparkles in their eyes.

They seemed quite pitiful to me, so when we entered the store I made a proposal.

"I'll treat you to a tea set. Also, we'll get

some souvenirs for Letia."

"Really?! Then I'll have Pudding A La Mode with milk tea!"

"Umm, I would like a chocolate cake and matcha latte!"

"Woah, so fast!"

When I said I'll treat them, they immediately secured counter seats and ordered from the menu.

I asked the waiter who received orders, Latem-san to pass a message to Cloude.

I also made an order for a cup of tea and watching the twins ate their tea sets with appetite I waited for Cloude.

"I was wondering when will you come to pick up your winter clothes, and finally you're here."

"Well, as expected the cold started getting

to me. Also here, the cake I made."

I passed a box with shortcakes that I had in my inventory to Cloude, and in exchange, I received the winter version of the Ochre Creator I have previously changed into in the store's dressing room and had the【Equipment Consolidation】removed from, then switched equipment.

The winter clothing treated with cold resistance processing had retained more heat than previously and the inside felt pleasant in touch.

While I was returning from the dressing room to my seat, I looked at Lyna and Al who haven't noticed me changed in the winter clothes.

"Ah! A cat! Come here kitty～."

"Lyn-chan, let me pat it as well!"

When Lyna called the adult Lucky Cat,

Socks, he quickly jumped on top of her knees. Lyna stroked Socks lightly under the chin with her fingertips, Al too, was very familiar with Letia's tamed mobs so he gently pat the cat's back.

Seeing Socks purr loudly, Cloude walked up to me and muttered.

"Hmm? You brought me models for dressing up? My mood is uplifted."

'Don't get uplifted, pervert! Keep your hands off them!"

Cloude squinted and looked at the two with a hand on his chin, and did not ever try to state it was just a joke. His eyes were serious.

Then noticing my voice, the twins looked my way but didn't join the conversation.

"If you're not acting as model introduction intermediary, then is there

something else you came with?"

"I want you to buy a new ingredient information and recipe which provide cold and heat resistances, also the ingredient cultivation method."

"Hmm. Is that a request to me as【Commonest Café & Clothier】's owner? Or the sub-master of the 【Crafting Guild】?"

"Uh, the stuff I'd like to consult with you about includes that."

Listening to my poorly constructed request, Cloude seemed to want to know in more detail and invited me to a seat further away from Lyna and Al.

"Well, drink the two sample drinks first."

"Cheers then——hm, it's ginger tea. And the other one is mint tea. Two types of ingredients huh. Both of them give

resistance effects."

Cloude seemed to misunderstand the nature of it a little, he would probably be surprised to learn these two were originally food-based items. Thinking so, I smiled.

"So, would you buy this information?"

"Certainly, there's a growing demand for cold resistance effect due to the recent update. And the only ones who can afford armour with cold resistance treatment are wealthier players. Which means this would be in very high demand among players who don't spend much time in the game."

He had immediately analysed the demand for the items, but he also seemed to be thinking about something else.

"Personally, I would like to add the two drinks to the 【Commonest Café & Clothier】's menu as they are. In addition to that, if there's an ingredient similar to

mint, I could offer chocolate mint and mint hard candies as well."

However——here Cloude interrupted for a moment.

"But that's for me personally, as for the【Crafting Guild】I can't decide this by myself. Above all, there's few crafters who have the Cooking Sense among the members so the material wouldn't spread widely, currently there's no foundation to use there."

"Just as I thought, ehh."

Haa, I sighed and looked away from Cloude, turning towards Lyna and Al playing with Socks, the Lucky Cat.

Realizing what my gaze meant, Cloude nodded.

"I see, the information this time came from those two? Or rather, "those twins"

would be more precise? They were the ones because of whom you furiously rushed into the forest full of PKs, huh?"

It was the first time he's seen them. But he knew about that, I muttered in my mind.

The rush into the forest full of PKs happened when the PK guilds starting with【Flame Prison Corps】 have gone on a rampage, back then Emily-san, Letia and I headed over to that forest.

Seeing a bitter look on my face, Cloude made a nasty grin.

"I see. So you're trying to sell information as high as possible for the junior players you're watching over."

"...What, can't I?"

"No, of course you can. What I personally can offer for this information is 500kG."

He said and made an apologetic expression as I scratched the back of my head.

"Sorry. Also, as for the entirety of【Crafting Guild】it would be difficult to act immediately."

Cloude sipped some tea in order to moisten his throat, and added.

"Well, if it can be continuously provided I might sweeten the deal a little to accommodate. Also, if you ask other players you might get a better price than I can offer you."

"It would be great if you could accommodate, but I think it might be difficult to cultivate it enough for a stable supply. Well, as for price's negotiation I'll ask Lyna and Al for now——"

"Fueh? What is it, Yun-san?"

"...Urk, do you need us join the conversation?"

The twins who stuffed their cheeks with cake had swallowed what they had in their mouths and spoke.

"Looks like you can sell that item's info for 500kG, how about it? Want to sell it?"

"500kG?! That's the...! That price is 100 times more than we get for the quests we receive! It's decided, we're selling! I should buy cold resistance equipment first, definitely!"

"L-Lyn-chan calm down! We're sharing it between three so it's 160kG each! B-but we haven't ever earned this much so fast, right. Um, we have no problems with it!"

Hearing the result of my negotiations with Cloude the two started dancing in joy, but because of that the two had revealed just how broke they are, making us look at

them with pity.

"Hey, Yun. Those two are..."

"Cloude, can you prepare some sweets for takeaway for the two? I'll pay."

"It'll be my treat in that case. I can't pay them more than 500kG directly, but I can treat them as thanks for bringing in information."

"We've got a deal then."

After I shook Cloude's hand, he had paid Lyna and Al 500kG. Then I passed him the Hakuga material and all the documentation I had on it.

Seeing the strange plant, Cloude made a strange expression and immediately passed it to the【Commonest Café & Clothier】's café part's crafters.

"Well then, pick what you would like for a takeaway."

"Yay. I'll take this and this!"

"I would like chocolate custard and cream puffs."

In the end, receiving cookies, cream puffs and candies such as éclairs from Cloude, Lyna made a blissful expression, but then she was startled as if she realized something.

"I just thought of something amazing! If we find and sell information on new items' use we can get easy money!"

"Lyn-chan, it's not something we can make our goal and pull off."

Cloude and I nodded to Al's retort, but Lyna ignored that and continued to rouse herself up.

"Ain't that fine? Find useful items and sell information! It's like becoming skilled treasure hunters! Fufun, sounds cool right?"

Placing a hand on her chin she imagined herself spectacularly finding new items. I bet she'll face reality soon enough, I thought and smiled bitterly but did not retort to her delusions.

"Oh Lyn-chan. We'll trouble everyone if we stay too long, let's go home! Well then, excuse us. Yun-san, we'll lead you to our【Fresh Green Wind】's guild home."

Catching the nape of Lyna's neck, who had headed off to the land of delusions, Al left the store.

"I'll come again, Cloude."

"Yeah, by the time you come again we'll try to make some delicious sweets with these ingredients."

I bid Cloude a light farewell and headed after the twins.

Then once I quickly caught up with Lyna

and Al who went outside to the main road, I lined next to Al and followed him.

"Come to think of it, it's the first time I'm going to Letia's and yours 【Fresh Green Wind】 guild home."

"True. Rather, isn't Yun-san like, second person to be invited inside from non-guild members?"

"By the way, the first one was Emily-san."

"Is that so. I wonder what kind of guild home it is."

I recalled the renovated and extended 【Eight Million Gods】 guild home, and had some expectations of the 【Fresh Green Wind】's home, but soon shook it off from my head.

There was a huge difference between number of members, their levels and nature, it made no sense to expect anything

similar.

And, the place I was guided to by Lyna and Al, was a two story house with a stable expansion beside it.

I felt it gave off a cute impression, as I was guided inside the guild home by the two.

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"Sorry to intrude."

Inside there was kitchenette, dining room and a large room used as a living room where a large wooden table was located. Then, up the stairs leading to the second floor were rooms on the sides.

"It's simple and gives off a sense of security."

"Yun-san, doesn't that imply there's nothing in here?"

"It's fine. We and our guild are just commoners. But one day I would like it if we acquired a big mansion in the game."

"Ah, no, that's not what I meant. I mean there's not much decorations which makes it refreshing! Anyway, I'd like to greet Letia, where is she?"

Since she wasn't in the large room that took majority of the first floor, it must mean she's on the second floor, I thought and looked up the stairs.

"Letia-san isn't on the second floor."

"Oh? Is that so."

"Yes. Letia-san has her own dedicated room."

"Heh, a private room eh. She's sure something, that Letia."

So Letia did think about the guild master's dignity after all, I thought a little impressed.

However, considering she wasn't on the first or the second floor of the guild home, was she maybe underground? I took a look around and outside a large window, for just a moment I saw something long and grey pass by.

"......?!!"

I must be seeing things, I thought, and when I stared outside the window again I saw the grey thing pass again, it was knocking on the window glass from the outside.

When I rushed to the window and opened it in a hurry——I saw an elephant occupy a section of the stables.

"Oh, wow. So stables even have elephants these days... heck, NO WAY that's actually

the case!"

"What are you yelling on about?"

"?!! Letia!"

"Yes, Yun-san, hello."

An elephant was sitting in the stable, or to be precise, it was Letia's tamed Ganesha young beast.

On top of brown straw spread all over the stables, inside of it there were summoned tamed beasts all over.

Herbivore, Mill Bird, Fairy Panther, Runner Bug, Fairy and the Ganesha's young beast.

Letia stood in the middle of all the tamed mobs, but——

"Why are you in a place like that?"

She was the 【Fresh Green Wind】's

guild master, why would she stay alone in a stables beside the guild home? I wondered.

"Yun-san, the dedicated room I spoke of earlier was this place."

When Al sighed and said that I took a good look at Letia's dedicated room again. Enduring the wind and rain, there was a straw bed and sofa inside there, as well as lantern for lighting, making her stay comfortable.

Moreover, considering the cold days continued because of the【Cold Damage】implementation, the Will O 'Wisp had warmed Letia and others while making sure not to hurt them.

If I were to represent that sight in one word, it would be "shabby".

"Letia, it's my first time hearing of a guild master living in a stable."

I stared at Letia intently, but she responded as if it was natural.

"As expected, I can't stay in the guild home together with Mutsuki and others summoned. Just like this, I deepen my bonds with my comrades."

She said and brushed the Herbivore with her hand, that's when the fairy had sat on top of her head.

"Haa... then why not just use《Dismissal》? Summoning seven tamed mobs is really reckless."

"Certainly, I barely manage it, but the continuous summon raises my【Taming】Sense level.

Hearing Letia say that with a straight face, I made a strange grimace but...

"I came to talk with you today, Letia. It's hard to talk like this so we'll head over

there."

"Eh?! WE are going to the stable?!"

Seriously? I passed by Lyna who said that and leaving the guild home from the front door, I turned towards the stable.

And we entered it.

"I can call them out here, right. Ryui, Zakuro—— 《Summon》 !"

Since I was visiting their guild home I dismissed Ryui and Zakuro upon exiting the【Atelier】but now I called them out in the stable. We sat down on the straw sofa.

The straw that was spread on it had contained a lot of air, producing a slight rebound. Along with the sound of rustling cloth I slightly sank into it.

Although it seemed like I could easily lose my balance on the straw sofa, but when Ryui lied down behind me as if to

support my back it had become a surprisingly comfortable position.

"...This is unexpectedly nice. How do I say it, it provides a different type of comfort from a bed."

"Welcome, Yun-san, to the stable world."

"Get a hold of yourself, Yun-san! Common sense... don't throw away your common senseee!"

"Don't make us complete outsiders!"

While I leaned my back on Ryui, Zakuro sat on top of my knees.

I started feeling sleepy from the warmth the two provided, but Lyna and Al's voice pulled me back.

"Right. Let's get to the main topic. Letia, sorry for borrowing Lyna and Al for all of yesterday and today."

"No, since I went on a joint quest with other small and medium guilds, I was relieved that they are with you, Yun-san."

"Glad to hear that. Also——"

I winked to the twins, when I did the two have pulled out Hakuga plant and the two drinks made from it. Furthermore, they passed 180kG obtained from the information sale to Letia.

"This is the money for selling information about the ingredient you were using. That's your share."

Splitting the 500kG from the information sale into three equal parts, Lyna and Al passed Letia her share, but she was completely disinterested in money and didn't even spare it a glance. Instead she turned towards the Hot Drink and Cool Drink.

"Ohh, that wild flower I was chewing on."

After drinking the two drinks one after another, Letia exhaled.

"So it can turn delicious like this. As for money, deposit all of it to the guild funds."

That sloppy handling of money is just like her, I thought and smiled wryly.

Since the main topic of the conversation had ended just like that, we naturally moved onto normal chat.

"How was doing the event with other small guilds?"

"Hmm. We took on the quests that weren't unreasonably hard for us and joined up with similar guilds and players who are active at similar times. Well, we didn't finish that many quests over those few days, but we got about seven chips."

"As for me, I got 9 chips until yesterday."

"Possibly, the impromptu parties I made

might have had poor efficiency."

Strength drained from the two of us sitting in the stable, we continued the conversation while not meeting our gazes.

Seeing us in such state, Lyna and Al prepared a simple table out of a wooden box and wood from the side of the table.

There was a table, but since it was lonely without anything on it I took out sandwiches and drinks from my inventory, we also took out candy we got from the【Commonest Café & Clothier】.

"This custard is delicious. Yum yum."

"Here, Letia. Tea's refill."

"Thank you."

I stood up from the straw sofa and poured everyone tea, then fed small pieces of sandwiches to Ryui and Zakuro.

Since Letia had many tamed mobs, Lyna and Al helped her to carry food for them.

Mutsuki who manipulated with his long nose to grab sandwiches and cream puff and Runner Bug who used its front limbs dexterously, were eating food on their own.

Mill Bird and the Fairy were very small, so they pecked sandwich cut into tiny pieces. Herbivore ate food from Lyna's hand and the wisp didn't eat normal food, instead eating herb materials from Al's hand to increase the light intensity of his body.

I watched the little tea party that suddenly started while drinking my tea and ——

"Yun-san, seconds please."

"That was fast! Geez..."

The two-thirds of the prepared food was

already eaten by Letia and the small elephant Mutsuki.

It can't be helped, I muttered and took out the strawberry cake I had stored away in my inventory.

"If you're fine with a strawberry cake, then."

"By all means! A whole cake!"

As Mutsuki's and Letia's expression changed completely into ones full of sparkle, I took out a whole cake for each of them.

"Lyna, Al, want to eat some as well?"

"I-I'll pass. I'm full just by looking at this."

"I-I'm full as well."

Saying so, the two shook their hands, refraining.

After I passed a whole cake to Letia she stabbed a fork in the middle of it and started eating in large chunks.

Mutsuki used his nose dexterously to pick the soft cake little by little. Since his nose was full of fresh cream, he'll have probably have to have it wiped later, I thought.

And then I realized a spiral of green wind had appeared in front of me, and the Mischievous Fairy appeared from inside of it.

"Invited by sweetness, I abruptly appear! It is I, the Mischievous Fairy!"

She floated in front of me and made a pose, after which she sat down on top of my head.

"You... what did you even come here for?"

"What, you ask? Fairies are free beings!

Also, since I shared the cake I got with the other fairies my share was small, so I want to eat more!"

She suddenly appeared and then started pulling on my hair requesting a cake.

Should I cave in to her request here? While I wondered that, the fairy riding on top of Letia's head, Yayoi, stared at me.

"...Cake for me too."

"See? My compatriot here also wants some! Now, hand over the cake!"

I looked questioningly towards Letia, who stuffed her cheeks with the large chunks of the cake from what she had pierced on the fork. She nodded.

"Haa, it can't be helped huh. A whole cake would too big, I'll give you some cut cake."

I heaved a sigh and took out a cake split into six equal parts, then on dishes I split

up portions for the Mischievous Fairy and Yayoi.

"Yaay! Thanks for the food!"

"Thanks!"

They started eating the cake with their bare hands. I raised myself in order to brew some tea again since mine went cold, meanwhile I watched the two lick the whipped cream from their hands.

When I was holding the teapot with fresh warm tea, I heard several footsteps from the direction of the stables' entrance and turned around.

"...You guys, what are you doing here?"

Ahead of where I turned around to with a teapot in my hand, stood Emily-san, she had an appalled expression.

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Stared at by Emily-san who had an amazed expression, I ended up laughing dryly.

"Why aren't you in the guild home and instead inside the stable beside it? Letia is one thing, but why is even Yun-kun actively tea-partying here? Shouldn't you be the one to stop this?"

"Uh, I thought the same as well at the start. But here we have Letia's tamed mobs and its wide enough for me to call out Ryui and Zakuro too, the straw sofa is surprisingly comfortable to sit in and... um, I'm sorry."

In the middle, I started making excuses and in the end, I lowered my head apologetically.

"Well, I understand what you want to say.

If I didn't bring someone with me today, I wouldn't have said a word."

As she said that I rose my head to look at Emily-san, and saw another player stand in her shadow.

The player had a peculiar hood on her head which had two pointed triangles on it ——a so-called nekomimi hood, judging from the physique it was a woman shorter than I am.

Emily-san turned around to the person she brought and spoke.

"I'm sorry. I'll have Letia go to the guild home now so that we can talk there."

"Nono, I don't mind it. I prefer this place... it would be a waste to get away from the fluffy paradise in front of me."

She seemed to mutter something by the end, but we couldn't hear it too well and

were puzzled, but agreed for the time being.

The player sat down on the straw sofa as to face Letia and "yo" she raised one hand in a greeting.

"Hey Letia, been since yesterday. Your guild has surprisingly many human resources I see."

To respond to the nekomimi-hooded player who didn't mind the tea party, Letia swallowed the cake she was stuffing herself with, drank some tea and exhaled, all at her own pace.

"Ber. Both Yun-san and Emily-san aren't【Fresh Green Wind】's guild members, they are outsiders who just help us out sometimes."

Listening to the two's conversation Emily-san sat down on the corner of the straw sofa, and chagrined slightly seeing

how comfortable it is.

I prepared fresh tea and a cake for them.

Thank you, said the woman called Ber and received it with a light nod. Stared at by her sharply like I was a prey, my body stiffened momentarily.

Lyna, Al and I were confused not knowing the situation, so Emily-san interjected with timely help.

"She's Bergamot. A guild master of a small guild like【Fresh Green Wind】is."

"I'm the【Fluffy Tail Association】's guild master, Bergamot. Feel free to call me Ber."

Based on the guild master's appearance and the guild's name I could imagine what kind of guild it is.

"I didn't think Yun-san would be here."

The nekomimi-hooded player called Ber

stared at me with a fearless smile.

"You know Yun-san, Ber?"

"It's far beyond the level of "know"! We

the【Fluffy Tail Association】are a guild whose hobby is to observe animal-type tamed mobs' fluffiness! Among people like us, she's really famous as a fluffy-taming player!"

Told so, I quickly moved Zakuro from on top of my knees to behind me.

What's with that agile skill? Puzzled Zakuro tried to move out from behind me, but I hid him away from Ber's line of sight.

"Why hide him∽. I won't cuddle those who don't want it. C'mon fluffies, let me cuddle you nicely."

Ber said so and extended her arms. While Ryui and Zakuro haven't gone out to her, Letia's Herbivore Haru and Mill Bird Natsu, who already knew her have approached.

She enjoyed cuddling them for a moment, then drank some of the tea I

prepared, exhaled with satisfaction and continued the conversation.

"The reason Ber came to the guild home this time, is to discuss future cooperation between the small guilds, right?"

Emily-san spoke fluently informing us, although I still wondered why did an outsider such as her know these circumstances.

When I involuntarily ended up asking about it, this time Letia had answered the question.

"We had Emily-san's help during the last joint quest of the small guilds, so I asked her to act as a guide at this time."

"I participated in order to efficiently finish material collection quest events, so I also benefit here."

After saying so, Emily-san sipped the tea

that was prepared for her.

"Then Ber-san and Emily-san met when Letia-san wasn't around in the guild, right?"

Hearing Lyna blurt out what she had on her mind, Ber smiled to affirm.

"Yuup⁓. I came here today to discuss an even closer cooperation together."

Well, we're still at the conceptual stage though, Ber added – stimulating Al's interest.

"So, what kind of cooperation is it supposed to be?"

And to learn what was happening to their guild and how was it going to change, Al threw out a question.

Ber looked at Letia and Emily-san, receiving a nod from them.

Since Letia was a little bad with

explanations and Emily-san was originally an outsider, Ber took on herself to explain.

"There's a lot of stuff to guilds, but the activities differ depending on the guild they belong to, right? Like guilds having lots of morning players, guilds with many players who work or are students. And there are also guilds that are centred around particular hobbies. All these guilds have disjointed and diverse login times, so the cooperation's concept is to settle on relatively similar login times and activities for small and medium guilds, thus forming an union."

"Our【Fresh Green Wind】also formed parties with Ber's and others' guilds, currently doing trial and error attempts."

Letia supplemented the information.

"Well, the stronger players form parties in cooperation with players who have a similar level of ability. Lower level players

also are organized into parties from among the backup members of each guild, is how it's gonna be."

When Ber said that, Lyna and Al anxiously looked towards Letia.

"Does that mean that despite being in the same guild, we won't be able to party together?"

"You are in the same guild so of course we'll party together. But it would be a waste if we limited our narrow friendly relations with others, is what it means."

It was a high hurdle for Lyna who was bad with socializing, but this was necessary.

If they remained as a small guild forever, one day they'll meet their limit. Moreover, newcomer training is directly connected to developing those smaller guilds.

Letia was properly thinking for Lyna's

and Al's sake.

Matching her words, Ber also spoke to the twins.

"So far we were speaking about hanging out together among the guild masters, but we're also slowly talking about matching less experienced players."

"I-I get it. But I'm kind of dissatisfied with you saying we have little experience and narrow friendly relations!"

"Lyn-chan. The only acquaintances we have is Letia-san, Yun-san and Emily-san, as well as the weapon and armour crafters."

"Ugh! C-certainly that is the case!"

"Let's agree, Lyn-chan. And do our best to broaden our circle of friends."

Told so by Al, Lyna reluctantly nodded.

And when the place's atmosphere

relaxed, Ber spoke seriously again.

"Although I said 'slowly' earlier, personally I would like it to make it urgent."

"What do you mean by that?"

When Al asked the question, Ber looked towards me for a second before looking back at the twins again.

"What's important, is that you two know a skilled【Bow】Sense user."

Hearing these words, Letia, Emily-san and I roughly realized what was it about.

"So what of it?"

Lyna said straightforwardly, well that was indeed the case, I thought. The【Bow】-type Senses——they was mostly referred to as poor Senses and treated with prejudice by other players.

The twins who held no prejudice towards

the 【Bow】 Sense were very valuable to Ber.

"By the way, our guild's name is 【Fluffy Tail Association】, but I'm the only one in it that's overflowing with animal love."

Was there any need in explaining that? Maybe the person herself thought it is? I retorted in my mind withholding myself from speaking it out, and listened to the continuation.

"And in this guild of mine I have a member who has the 【Bow】 Sense, well, because of failing in a party before that member has very few acquaintances."

We listened to what Ber had to say as she entered the main problem.

"The people who can party up with her without holding any prejudice are very valuable. That's why if possible, I want them to have good relations together with

my members. Oh, of course we'll train the【Bow】Sense user to have the required skill in order not to leech."

Exhausted by speaking all that at once, Ber moistened her throat with tea and exhaled. That's when Lyna had spoke.

"If that's the case then, leave it to me! I'll properly look after that person!"

"You're committing all too fast again, Lyn-chan. But I have no reason to say no, so let's make a trial party first."

Ber smiled seeing the two undertake the request without a hitch.

However, Emily-san and I who knew the twins had another reason to worry.

"It's fine that you're undertaking it, but can you properly play in a party?"

"Agreed. I'm mainly worried about Lyna holding them back."

"Why?! What is there bad about me?!"

'You should ask yourself that, with a hand on your chest."

Lyna reflexively objected, so I stared at her intently and responded. She reluctantly closed her eyes and her complexion had turned for worse as she recalled what she had done in the past.

"Yun-kun. It seems like she has awareness, doesn't this mean there's room for improvement?"

"You're right. Well, nothing bad should happen as long as Al's with them."

Lyna was a very active player, but just like her reflexive objection earlier, she is too impulsive. She should gain awareness and change that part of herself, at least a little bit.

That's where Letia muttered with her

eyes half-closed.

"In fact, you'll be meeting others as members of the【Fresh Green Wind】. It would be best if you didn't show them any scene of you randomly charging in, and leaving impression of being a weakling."

"Randomly charge in?! Weakling?!!"

Shocked by Letia's words, Lyna fell on top of the straw floor. Although no one especially worried about her, she stood up with an energetic movement after two, three seconds.

"We're going to do leveling! We need to train cautiously! As the【Fresh Green Wind】's representatives we can't afford to lose! C'mon Al, we're going right away!"

"This is what we should avoid, Lyn-chan! We need to plan carefully!"

Al caught Lyna's clothes to stop her, as

she stood up looking like desperation incarnate.

It can't be helped, I thought, sighed, and stood up.

"There's not enough time today, right? On another day I'll help you practice your movements for your party with that【Bow】Sense user."

"Really?! But our levels are way too different for us to make it a reference!"

"I just have to equip lower-level Senses, right? But this will be the only time I do it, got it?"

When worried about Lyna and Al I declared I'll help them out, Letia and Emily-san looked at me apologetically.

"Yun-san, is it really all right for you to party together with Lyna and Al day after day?"

"Actually I would like to look after them as well, but together with Letia we are included among members for the next small guilds' quest event."

"There's no problem. I also enjoy myself this way. This is also an opportunity for me to level some of my new low-level Senses I acquired."

Hearing my answer Letia and Emily-san exhaled with relief.

And then, Lyna has——

"Hey, Ber-san. I'm curious about something, do you actually have animal ears inside that hood?"

"H-hey Lyn-chan, you're being rude."

"Nyahaha, yup. But they aren't the real thing, it's a nekomimi band."

While we talked about Lyna and Al, the person herself merrily spoke with Ber.

Lyna was unable to hide her excitement as Ber slid down the hood and took off the nekomimi band she wore on her head.

Other than that, aside from normal equipment Ber also had cat paw gloves equipped as well as a tail accessory. She showcased all off her love for animals.

When I was leaving the【Fresh Green Wind】's guild home, Ber told me about Senses of the【Bow】Sense user who was to party together with the twins.

Chapter 5
The Sewers and Rat Extermination

On another day, as promised to Lyna and Al, I joined them in order to practice their cooperation in a party and was currently looking at the quest board for a suitable quest.

"I can't see any quest suitable for us."

Lyna dazedly looked at the subjugation and drop item collection quests.

"Lyn-chan, think disqualifying them without any basis is no good."

"Hmm, how about this! 【Skeleton Subjugation】quest!"

When Al pointed out Lyna growled and pointed with her finger at a quest.

I shuddered hearing those words and

looked at where Lyna pointed.

The location was Horia Cave. My face cramped up as I saw that on the bottom it said that the requirement was to defeat twenty skeletons.

"Skeletons, huh. We have beaten them before together with Letia-san, so I think it's a good choi——"W-wait a second!"——What is it?"

In panic I stopped Al from consenting.

Puzzled by the fact I stopped them in a hurry, the two looked at my curiously, but despite reflexively reacting I could not find an appropriate reason for that.

"Well, you see. Even though you beat before it together with Letia, this time we don't have her strength. And there are also some troublesome mobs such as Spectres spawning in there, considering we're training cooperation this time it might be

better to lower the degree of difficulty a little, is what I thought..."

Once I gave them really forced reasons, I felt like the twins' gazes were piercing right through me.

The truth is, that I don't want to tell the two that I'm bad with Horia Cave's ghosts and such.

Covered in cold sweat inside of my mind I looked at the two's reactions——

"You're right. I completely forgot about that. Thank you, Yun-san!"

"Thank you for reminding us what we've forgotten."

"Ahahaha, it's all right."

While I let out a dry laughter, I felt really uncomfortable receiving praises from the two.

"But lowering the degree of difficulty, the

quest most convenient for practising party cooperation would be... well, something like this?"

With that said, Lyna pointed at a quest.

I ended up interfering earlier because of my fear of skeletons, but I originally intended to respect the two's choice so I closed my mouth now and watched.

"Isn't this one good? 【Rat Extermination】 quest. Grey Rats have invaded the town and continue to breed. We're supposed to exterminate them."

"They're weak mobs we can beat even solo, seems good for practising party cooperation."

With the quest decided, Lyna got into a good mood and smiled.

"Looks like it's decided. Then let's take the quest and hear the detailed

information from the Quest NPC."

"And next we will consult roles in the party, right?"

When I started talking about the next actions, Al had interjected saying what I wanted to say. I nodded and the three of us headed South-west of the First Town.

There on a chair, sat a man holding a dirty scoop.

"We are the players who accepted the【Rat Extermination】quest. Give us the detailed information!"

"Lyn-chan, why are you acting high and mighty towards an NPC?"

I smiled wryly in response to Al's retort, meanwhile, the quest proceeded.

"Ohh, so you guys undertook the quest. Actually you see, rats slipped into the town and are multiplying which is a huge

trouble. They're merely rats, but there's so many of them that I can't deal with them alone. Get rid of them all for me."

"Leave it to us! So, where are they?! Inside a mansion or a warehouse? Or did they take over some field?!"

Excited, Lyna asked for the quest's location. That's when the man rose from the seat heavily and then opened up a large iron lid that was behind him.

"They slipped into this sewer here. Inside is dark and damp. There are grates to prevent people from entering, but rats can freely go in and out through the small gaps. Moreover, although I was entrusted with the sewers management I dropped the key to the grates when I was assaulted by rats. So please take care of it."

The NPC said so and once again sat down on the log that he used as a chair. I looked at him and my face twitched.

A dark, damp place. This pattern is no good, I thought.

"About the roles in the party... hey, Yun-san. You're a little pale, are you okay?"

"Eh?! Yeah, I'm fine. Perfectly fine..."

I can't show a pathetic side of myself to those two, I thought and to show dignity of someone older than them, I participated in their discussion about the party structure.

"I'll have the tank role and I will restrain the enemy with my short spear, if there's a chance I will attack. Al is a fire mage so he's in the rearguard, so all that's left is how we incorporate the player with【Bow】Sense."

"How much are you limiting your abilities, Yun-san?"

In response to Al's question I confirmed my own Sense status and selected the Senses I could use for this practice.

"Let's see. Basically, I'm limiting my means of attacking to only the bow."

"Then you are sealing enchant's strengthening and weakening, earth magic and melee attacks, as well as item attacks?"

"Yeah, that's about it."

Learning that I seal my various means of attacking, Lyna seemed to get dejected. Still, that's something that was decided right from the start.

The two had to come up with what kind of role will I have, except for delivering bow attacks.

"The Senses I plan to equip are【Magic Bow】【Sky Eyes】【Sorcery】【Swiftness】【Crafter's Knowledge】【Bodily Resistance】【Spiritual Resistance】, those seven. For the remaining three, Ber told me her guild's【Bow】Sense owner's build so I will pick

up new Senses to make my build as similar to that as possible."

"Yun-san, but that will consume a lot of SP, won't it?"

"I've got plenty of it so you don't have to worry."

I said and acquired three new Senses.

"What new Senses are you picking up, Yun-san?"

"【Physical Attack Increase】, 【Vital Points Knowledge】 and 【Pre-Emptive Knowledge】. Simply put, they're Senses that increase damage and focus on critical damage."

Possessed SP44

【Magic Bow Lv1】
【Sky Eyes Lv13】

【Swiftness Lv18】
【Sorcery Lv17】
【Crafter's Knowledge Lv3】
【Bodily Resistance Lv3】
【Spiritual Resistance Lv1】
【Physical Attack Increase Lv1】
【Vital Points Knowledge Lv1】
【Pre-Emptive Knowledge Lv1】

Unequipped:

【Bow Lv50】
【Longbow Lv30】
【See-Through Lv23】
【Dosing Master Lv3】
【Alchemy Lv44】
【Synthesis Lv44】
【Enchant Arts Lv40】
【Engraving Lv25】
【Earth Element Talent Lv29】
【Taming Lv19】
【Cook Lv15】
【Swimming Lv15】
【Linguistics Lv24】

Although I used some of my original equipment and Senses, this was quite near a pure【Bow】Sense build.

This was the very close to the build recommended to me by Myu, Taku and the others around the time I started playing OSO. While that, I showed my equipped Senses to Lyna and Al.

"It kinda feels like I'll be unreliable like this, will it really be okay?"

"Yun-san's equipment is much better than ours so there's no problem, but I think we need some Sense to detect traps and enemy surprise attacks."

"Then I could use【See-Through】, but I would have to switch something out."

"True, it might be necessary, but we won't know unless we go and see for ourselves."

Lyna's anxious proposal was refused by Al, she quietly peeked through the hole leading to the sewer.

"What is it, Lyn-chan?"

"...I'll get down first, next is Yun-san. Al goes down last."

"Y-yup. Got it."

Lyna a bit seriously announced the order and went down the ladder.

Feeling I went down about seven meters below the ground, I entered the dim sewer.

Since we were underground, the moist and lukewarm air had wrapped around me, making the new winter equipment unnecessary.

"It's dark like a dungeon and we can't see

much, huh. Al, light please."

"Yup. Got it. [][] 《Torch》 "

Chanting the spell for a light source of the fire element, which was similar to the light element's 《Light》, Al illuminated the inside of the sewer.

The sewers had arched ceilings and were made of brick, in the middle flowed the sewage and on the sides, there were footholds just a little above the sewage level.

And I was able to get a full picture of the sewers by using my 【Sky Eyes】, but I couldn't find any of the propagating Grey Rats.

"Ohh, so sewers are even narrower than dungeons. It might be difficult for me to manoeuvre with my weapon in here."

Lyna waved her short spear to the sides,

up and down, and hit both the wall and the ceiling from a standing position.

"Well, isn't it fine to think it as of a practice to overcome your weakness?"

Seeing the situation inside the sewer, we consulted on the means of fighting.

"I know, but how am I supposed to attack?"

"Focus on thrusts, as well as parrying and bashing with the shield? Also, it might be best if you refrain from using Arts, Lyna."

"Uhhh, I-I get it. It's so that I don't accidentally self-destruct in this small place, right?"

Lyna nodded despite the fact she was gritting her teeth. Well, I understand that she can't fool around and use flashy attacks, but we need her to bear with it here.

"So about the rearguard roles, what do

you think Al and I should be doing?"

"Umm, attack from a distance with fire magic and the bow, right?"

"You need to devise something to make that work. In a place like this it's difficult to visually find enemy without auxiliary Senses. Also, bow has point attacks so it's difficult to aim unless the enemy is a big mob."

Hearing the explanation so far, Al nodded convinced.

"Then I'll release fire magic first and when it illuminates everything, Yun-san will shoot. How about that?"

"Yep. Then let's move on like that for now."

After confirming how will the front and the back move, we finally started to walk through the sewer.

Still, since we were moving slowly, there was time to talk.

"Haa, if we had Letia-san with us this would be real easy."

"I actually think this would be difficult for Letia."

"Ehh? But Letia-san has lots of tamed mobs and various moves to use. We were saved many times thanks to that."

It seemed like based on the vague image of the always hungry elf who was always eating something, the twins imagined her not to have any weakness, but even Letia had things she was bad with.

"Just like Lyna, she's most likely bad with narrow places. You need space for tamed mob summoning, so her strength is limited by the location."

The large mob, Mutsuki the Ganesha and

medium mobs such as Fuyu the Fairy Panther and Kisaragi the Runner Bug would be difficult to use here, and Mill Bird Natsu wouldn't be able to fly freely.

In which case, the mobs Letia could use were the Will o' Wisp Natsu and the Yayoi the fairy. This would result in her forces being limited in narrow places.

Lyna and Al seemed to have seen a similar situation, and looked convinced now.

"So what kind of places are you bad with, Yun-san?"

"You're being rude, Al. There's no way Yun-san who's highly versatile anywhere and any time would have a weakness. Also, enemy makes their appearance."

Lyna's open trust in me was so heavy I was unable to respond in any way, meanwhile, we encountered enemy mobs.

"Now, enemy has come! Let's quickly exterminate them!"

Lyna stared at the darkness where the《Torch》's light did not reach.

There was a wriggling presence in there, countless red eyes glowing in the darkness have stared at us.

"I'll go first! [][]《Fire Shot》!"

Al fired a single target attack spell that had higher power than the beginner《Fireball》spell.

While staring at the light made by the high-velocity flame bullet I set up my bow.

The flame landed, revealing the figures of several rats trying to avoid it.

"Six rats! Let's go!"

At the same time Lyna rushed out, I selected a certain bow-type Art for a pre-

emptive attack.

"[][]《Magic Bow Skill – Phantom Arrow》!"

An arrow leaving a red tail behind itself had pierced the rat in the front.

Normally, the attack would end there, but this time – five magic arrows of the same red colour have appeared from the red tail that was behind the first arrow and pierced other rat one after another.

"Phew, it's over."

What I shot, was a new Art from the【Magic Bow】Sense.

The bow-type Art【Magic Bow Skill – Phantom Arrow】in addition to hitting the enemy with the arrow itself, had created five magic arrows from the red tail the main arrow left behind and damaged the enemy.

Just like it happened earlier, the main arrow hit the enemy and the five magic arrows each attack other enemies, but it was also possible to concentrate all the magic arrows on one enemy.

According to that description it would come out as a powerful Art, but the magic arrows' power is dependant on INT stat and their hit rate and tracking accuracy varied greatly on DEX stat.

Moreover, there was no chain bonus even if attacks were concentrated on a single enemy so it was not possible to increase the amount of damage that way.

Lyna looked at me with resentment in her eyes after I used that Art to test it out.

"...Yun-san, there's no point in cooperating if you beat them all alone!"

"S-sorry."

"That's right. Even though Yun-san is matching her level with ours, you have many Arts you can use, you also have to take that into account."

"Yun-san! Unless something really extraordinary happens, you are forbidden from using Arts!"

"Eh, okay..."

Told so by Lyna, I further sealed my Arts for the sake of party cooperation practice.

"Let's redo it! More rat have come!"

Al released fire magic and I shot a normal arrow towards a rat that jumped out of the darkness□□

"...You missed."

"Y-Yun-san..."

The twins looked at the arrow that pierced in the ground when the rat swiftly

avoided it, and then they looked at me with pity in their eyes, making me object.

"Wait, it's because my equipment strength decreased that my accuracy dropped!"

●

As a result of me re-configuring my Senses to match Lyna's and Al's level the accuracy of my bow has been reduced, making me realize again just how much the DEX stat affected the hit rate.

By the way, what I had currently equipped was not the【Black Maiden's Longbow】, but the unique weapon I received during the summer camp event - 【Wolf Commander's Longbow】.

Because of my stat decrease from the

change in the Sense build, the【Black Maiden's Longbow】showed some disadvantages such as a recoil damage caused by stat shortages. In order to avoid that I switched my weapon to the【Wolf Commander's Longbow】.

"Rats escaped from us. Normally mobs would have attacked back, I wonder if they're up to something?"

Ignoring my excuse-rebuttal from earlier, Lyna stared at the back of the sewer where the rats escaped, looking for any signs of them.

"I wonder as well. It kind feels like we're being led further in."

"I guess there's no point thinking about it."

Saying so, Lyna stepped forward.

As we cautiously moved ahead, our steps

loudly resounded on gravel on the ground.

And when we proceeded to the right on the branching in the sewer, we have reached a dead-end where sewage flowed into a very narrow tunnel. Numerous rats were waiting for us there.

"We're at a dead end this time! We won't let you run again! [][] 《Fire Shot》 !"

Continuing after Al who fired a flame bullet, I shot an arrow.

This time, the rat wounded by the flame was pierced by the arrow and defeated.

Although my attack power and hit rate decreased, being the second one to attack I beat the enemy. Regaining confidence, I prepared for another attack.

However, rats have counter-attacked with overwhelming numbers.

"Khh! There's so many of them, how

troublesome!"

While Lyna tried to finish off one rat with her short spear, four more tried to pass by her side.

She slammed two rats with her leather shield and stopped them, but one has jumped away from Lyna and rushed towards us in the rearguard.

"Al, he's going your way!"

"It's okay! [][] 《Fireball》 !"

Al shot a ball of fire towards the rat coming towards us. The ball of fire hit the rat, who in order to extinguish the fire jumped into sewage.

Following up, I shot an arrow and finished off that rat.

We have dealt with the rat that slipped towards the rearguard, but Lyna was still surrounded by three rats and was having a

hard time.

"Oh c'mon! They're moving completely different from the ones in the open world!"

"I'll finish one of them off, take care of the other two, Lyna!"

Three rats were kicking off the walls to make irregular movements, toying with Lyna.

Then, I predicted a rat would attack Lyna from behind and shot an arrow at it.

Since she was distracted by what was going on in front of her, Lyna noticed the attack from behind only in the last moment and has stopped moving, confused whether she should respond to the attack from in front or the back.

The next moment, an arrow caught the rat that jumped at Lyna from behind and pierced his body, after which it hit the

sewer's wall and turned into particles of light.

That's when Lyna had cleared herself of confusion and focused on the two rats in the front.

"Two rats left! Haa!"

She pierced one of the rats with her short spear, Al burned down the other with a fireball.

After confirming there was no other rats in the surroundings, Lyna heaved a long sigh and returned back to us in the rearguard.

"I think our cooperation was so-so, what do you think?"

"It didn't seem too bad to me? If it was just Lyn-chan and I, we would definitely take surprise attacks, and since you're having trouble holding enemy back it

might be easier with more people."

"I think there isn't anything I can say personally, I guess? Well, because my stats decreased I don't have enough power to beat them in one hit, which makes it a bit harsh on me."

"Oh well. Let's explore this place some more."

Although I left the party leader's role to Lyna, I was actually impressed to see that she can do it if she tries. Then, we moved forward in order to examine the dead end.

When we did, on top of a pile of white gravel we found a quest item called 【Sewer Key (B)】.

The fact that it was a B key meant there were multiple other keys as well. Maybe they're the type of key you need to open grates and proceed forward, I thought and when I turned around to where we came

from – five rats jumped out of the sewer.

"An enemy attack upon acquiring a key item, a classic! Now, let's go!"

"I'll go first! [][] 《Fire Shot》 !"

Al fired a flame bullet pre-emptively just like he did before, but this time the attack was avoided.

"Lyn-chan, block them!"

"I can't stop them all! I can't fight so many of them at once y'know?!"

Unlike the rats from before who split up between the vanguard and the rearguard, this time rats all pounced at Lyna.

"Hey! I really can't defend this!"

Using the shield strapped to her wrist she blocked attacks from two rats and was able to counter-attack against one more with her spear dealing damage, but she exposed

her right arm wielding short spear and received damage from two attacking rats.

"What's this? They barely deal any damage! In that case I can ignore defence and... eh, what?"

Suddenly, Lyna slipped down on her knees and sat down powerlessly.

From the rearguard I shot an arrow and finished off the rat Lyna had previously hit with her counter, also noticing the abnormality in Lyna.

As the time passed her HP slowly decreased, and her limbs were trembling faintly.

She lifted the shield and somehow managed to defend herself from attacks of two rats, but her HP continuously decreased due to chain damage she received.

That's when I used the 【Sky Eyes】 targeting ability, and yelled after checking the rats and Lyna.

"Lyna, use poison and paralysis antidotes! Al! These ones aren't Grey Rats! They're a different species called Paralytic-Poison Rats!"

Although they looked similar in the dark sewer, they were a different type of mobs than the Grey Rats. Based on their name and the current situation, it could be inferred that they caused Poison and Paralysis bad status.

"...I can't use potions because of 【Paralysis】."

"Al! I'll go collect Lyna, hold them back in the meanwhile!"

I lowered the bow and headed over to Lyna who kept receiving rats' attacks in the vanguard.

Lyna lost half of her HP already and continued to receive slip damage from the bad status.

I lent her a shoulder and while we retreated to where Al was we received attacks from the poison rats, but despite receiving poison bad status we haven't been paralysed and were able to successfully escape.

"I'll be casting, Yun-san! 《Firewall》!"

A wall of flames sprouted between us who were escaping and the rats in pursuit behind us, it had filled the sewer up to the ceiling.

Burnt by flames, rats dived into sewage one after another so we couldn't damage them too much, but we acquired some time.

I took out a potion and used it on Lyna, healing her up.

"Here, a potion. Can you try again?"

"Of course. This time I'll keep up."

Having her HP and status recovered by me, at the same time Al's Firewall disappeared, Lyna jumped towards the rats who were on the other side of the wall.

Thrusting her spear with the momentum of her movement she pierced the enemy and defeated him.

"Now, I should attack as well."

I nocked an arrow and aimed at a poison rat. If Al and I could finish off the remaining four poison rats the burden on Lyna would definitely lighten.

"[][]《Bow Skill – Arrow Stitching[][]"

"I'll join in. 《Fire Shot[][]"

However, our skills were interrupted in the middle of casting.

Suddenly I felt a pain in my right arm I used to pull the string of the bow and my attention was drawn to it, resulting in the Art misfiring as the arrow disappeared in the darkness of the sewer.

"Wha...t... hhya?!"

"A-animal skeleton?"

A small and light thing bit into my arm with sharp front teeth, holding to my body with four limbs. I reflexively tried to shake it off and smashed the thing into the sewer's wall, but a moment later I felt the same kind of pain in my left leg.

When I looked there, I saw the same type of thing biting my leg.

"□□?!!"

I screamed without a sound and raised my leg to shake off the rat's skeleton along with the gravel under my feet. That's when

I realized something.

The pile of gravel I was standing on wasn't gravel, but small bones□□most likely rat bones.

And noticed, that the rat bones beneath my feet were connecting with each other and turning into enemies, started surrounding me and Al.

By the time I noticed the rat bones beneath our feet were a trap it was all too late.

"Hy□□kyaah!!"

"□□U-UWAaaaah?!"

"Hey, Yun-san! Al!"

Al and I were attacked by multiple rat bone mobs called Curserat Bones at the same time, and were bitten all over our bodies.

Al had received the【Curse】bad status and having his skills sealed he lost the means to counteract and while he tried to fight back he was surrounded by bone rats who exhausted his HP completely.

When that happened the bone rats fighting Al had gathered around me and I ended up being swarmed by so many of them that I was unable to move. The bone rats tackled each other, rubbed each against one another, and as their movements gave me goosebumps I fell the same way Al did.

"Where are these mobs coming from?! And light disappeared too!"

As I fell to the ground without any HP left I could hear Lyna's voice as she struggled for a while longer, but before long I heard the sound of a human-sized something fall and the only sound that remained was that of dry bones colliding. After a while that sound had disappeared

and I selected "YES" from the menu allowing the usage of【Revival Medicine】.

"...It's pitch black here. Well, we relied on Al for light so I guess it's no wonder."

Even in the pitch black darkness I crawled on the ground and found the twins by blindly groping, then without any hesitation used the【Revival Medicine】.

"Owww... we died huh. In the end I attacked desperately, but was beaten."

"[][]《Torch》. Uuuh, they say you learn stuff upon death, but this time our mistakes really stand out."

Lyna and Al quietly got up. While recovering their HP that was restored up to 50% with the【Revival Medicine】, the two started reflecting on our mistakes.

"First, let's think why didn't we notice the appearance of bone rats. Also, if the light

disappears we end up fighting in complete darkness."

"As for the bone rats, it's because we don't have anyone who has Senses for spotting traps and such. We were optimistic, but【See-Through】is necessary after all."

"About light, it was because Al died. Lyna who has no Senses providing night vision has a lot of trouble battling in the darkness. We might need to prepare a lantern."

I said and took out a lantern I used for searching dungeons and caves, then lit it.

Together with Al's flame magic, we had secured two sources of light.

"""....."""

For a while the three of us stared at the light of the flame, but then I turned around to the two again.

"Um, I made a huge mistake in the

rearguard, sorry!"

"Huh?! But wasn't it unavoidable in that situation?"

"Although we had our skills disabled, but if I used AoE bow-type Art when the first bone rat bit me we would be able to make a turnaround, but I failed to do that."

Immediately after the first Art was interrupted I could use the 《Bow Skill – Gust of Wind》 to attack the surrounding bone rats, it would have dealt a decent amount of damage or even wiped them out.

"But it was really strange how Yun-san was shaken. Usually you're really really composed."

"Al. That's because of the difference in Sense levels and item quality, she doesn't mind using expensive consumables either."

"But that makes me kinda relieved. I thought Yun-san is super amazing, but she's no different from us."

I'm not a broken gamer like Myu, Taku or others. I'm a normal human who gets scared by ghosts and other stuff that appears in haunted houses.

"Hm, eh? You were all right with normal rats, but were shaken by the bone rats, so it doesn't seem like you're bad with rats overall, right? Speaking of which, your complexion turned worse when we entered the sewers, Yun-san, can it be that you're bad with horror stuff?"

"N-n-no such thin[][]"

"Ah, a bone rat behind you!"

"Hyah?!"

I reflexively turned around hearing Lyna's words, then sighed with relief when

I saw nothing in there.

Lyna stared at me intently and Al smiled wryly.

"Uuuh, fine! You're right! I'm bad with horror stuff, grotesque and ghosts!"

"I see, so Yun-san's weakness are horrors, hee."

Al stared at Lyna with appallment as she grinned broadly and seemed to be plotting something.

It was the same expression Myu made when she wondered when she should surprise someone else, so I decided to warn Lyna ahead of time.

"Just you try scaring me for no reason... and you know what'll happen, right?"

But instead, I smiled meaningfully at Lyna and stared at her.

When I did, she paled and shook her head energetically.

I didn't know what she imagined, but if I put it this way, the person herself would think of a few things she wouldn't want have done to her.

When we calmed down after a while, we stood up heavily and resumed the search in the sewers.

●

Basing on the failure earlier, we decided to adjust our combat styles.

I replaced the《Sky Eyes》Sense with the《See-Through》as we decided to focus on vigilance against surprise attacks.

Moreover, the amount of Arts I could use had reduced a little and it was decided that

Al and I will be in the vanguard.

"[][]《Bow Skill – Gust of Wind》!"

"[][]《Firewall》!"

At the same time we started combat, both of us attacked with area of effect skills at the same time.

《Bow Skill – Gust of Wind》 generated a wind pressure that spread from the arrow and damaged the enemy, and since there was no escape from it in the narrow closed sewer I could deliver damage with it even without 《Sky Eyes》 allowing me to see the enemy in the darkness.

Al's defensive magic 《Firewall》 deliver damage to rats who assaulted us without any plan and shaved their numbers by a fair percentage.

"I'll be going in!"

Lyna rushed towards the rats damaged

by our opening attacks and finished them off one after another.

However, instead of attacking with a short spear, she knocked down the rats with her leather shield.

Normally Lyna used the spear to beat enemy with as few moves as possible, but since rats received damage from our opening attacks, it was faster to just finish them off with the shield smash.

"Ahaha! I was bothered by how low level my【Shield】Sense is, but you can totally beat enemies with it!"

"Lyn-chan, don't overextend."

Al restrained Lyna who seemed like she would rush further out of our range.

Since she was rampaging grandly, about twenty percent of the poison rats and bone rats have escaped into the darkness.

"In the end, we defeated plenty of rats, but quite a bit escaped."

The mobs we met during the search of this sewer were common Grey Rats, Paralytic-Poison Rats and the bony Curserat Skeletons.

Every time we met multiple rats and received surprise attacks from sides, whenever we decreased their numbers through combat, the rats withdrew.

Repeating that we continued to search the sewers.

In the middle of search we ended up stumbling upon grates door and whenever we didn't have a key matching the lock, we had to search all over the sewer to find a fitting key.

As a result, we have completely memorized the structure of the sewers.

"The quest's clear condition is to exterminate all rats, including those who ran away."

"And all the rats that ran away are ahead of here, right."

We proceeded for a while without encountering any rats and arrived at the sewer's dead end where we found a collapsed brick wall with an opening leading to a narrow cave.

Considering a rat who seemed to be a sentry, had rushed into the back of the cave upon seeing us, this must have been the end of the dungeon.

"So this is the end point huh... let's go."

Lyna moved to the front and started walking inside the cave.

After we proceeded through a narrow hole, the cavity had spread widely open.

And something had approached us from the darkness, making loud footsteps.

"It's a boss□□Mutant Badrat."

Along with Al's mutter, a huge rat appeared.

It was a mutant rat who had long front teeth protruding upwards, sharp claws, grey fur no different from that of Grey Rat's, three vertical sets of red eyes and three tails which moved freely like whips.

The mutant rat of a cow's size had sucked a grey rat inside his mouth, then held a paralysis poison rat and a bone rat in his hands to stuff them into his mouth.

Then, as if to protect their boss, countless small rats surrounded him.

That's when we received a message through the menu saying that the【Rat Extermination】's condition of

exterminating all rats was fulfilled, and the condition had changed to "defeat the Mutant Badrat".

"So we just have to beat this guy to be done, right! HAAaaa□□"

Lyna poised her short spear as if to deliver a final attack and charged at the Mutant Rat.

That line is a death flag, I thought, but I still provided cover fire to support Lyna.

Al too assisted in defeating the three types of rats standing in Lyna's way.

"□□《Bow Skill – Gust of Wind》!"

"Let's go! □□《Firewall》!"

In order to decrease the burden on the twins, I used AoE attacks on the groups of rats.

However, the inside of the cave was wide

and there was place to run, so more than half of the rats have split to the sides, escaping our attacks.

"Lyn-chan! We're being surrounded!"

"I know. But rats aren't the only ones who can move freely in here! [][] 《Large Swing》 !"

Lyna held the short spear in a longest grip possible and spinning on her heel she swung her spear.

The swung short spear released wind pressure in all directions which shot down the incoming rats in mid-air.

Small rats had their bodies torn up by the spearhead as it skimmed them, or were smacked down by the handle.

The momentum of the rats' attack has decreased as Lyna intercepted the rats coming from the sides by using an area of

effect Art.

Together with Al, we haven't missed that chance and attacked rats on the left side by using our AoE Arts.

This time as not to allow them escape we sandwiched them with attacks from left and right, wiping them out all at once.

With the rats on the left side defeated, Lyna alone dove into the group of rats on the right, and from the centre of the group she blew away rats one after another by swinging her spear around.

"Ahahaha, poison and paralysis are nothing as long as they aren't applied!"

"Oh, I feel like I saw a game like this before, with a warrior fighting this way."

Giving off a feel of an action game's character smashing armies of weaklings Lyna had defeated the rats on the right

side. The only remaining ones were only the minions the Mutant Badrats was feasting on.

The mutant rat who hasn't joined the battle until his comrades were defeated, has finally started to move.

"Al, match me! ▯▯《Rapid Fire Bow – Second Form》!"

"Yes! ▯▯《Fire Shot》!"

Al's and my attacks passed above Lyna's head and aimed for the mutant rat's eyes.

Out of two of my arrows aiming for the eyes on the mutant rat's head, one was shot down by the freely-moving tail, but the remaining arrow pierced into the middle left eye.

Thanks to the effect of the【Vital Points Knowledge】 and 【Pre-Emptive Knowledge】Senses, I succeeded in cutting

down the mutant rat's HP by 10% with one blow.

"I'll take the left sidee!"

Lyna attempted to slip to the left side where the mutant rat had an eye crushed, but was restrained by the mutant rat's swift movement which didn't suit his size.

The mutant rat slapped away Lyna's protruded short spear with his tail and when her posture broke, he swung his sharp claws at her.

"?!! Half of his vision should be crushed, how can he still react to what's on the left side?!"

"Enemy has six eyes total so crushing one eye won't steal his vision away. Anyway, Lyn-chan, check your status!"

"Eh, no way?! This is bad, real bad, I got a bad status on me!"

Lyna who took distance from the mutant rat had calmed herself down, took out antidotes for【Poison】and【Curse】bad statuses and used them.

"The boss has characteristics of all rats in the sewers, doesn't he. The troublesome one is the【Paralysis】."

"But that doesn't change what we have to do!"

Al continued to steadily deal damage by firing flame bullets at regular basis. I also continued to shoot arrows without end.

"[][]《Calling Shield》!"

Using her short spear and the shield, Lyna devoted herself to defence as she activated the【Shield】-type Art that increased the amount of hate she gathered by the amount of damage the rearguard had dealt.

Because of that, the mutant rat was unable to move away from Lyna and could only keep attacking her with claws on his both hands, Lyna parried those attacks with her leather shield.

However, as the mutant rat's HP decreased to 50%, there was a change in his movements.

"He's withdrawing? Is he gonna charge... kyaah?!"

"Lyn-chan!"

After leaping backwards, the mutant rat got on his fours and lowered his body.

Although Lyna had braced herself with the shield protruded in front of her, guarding against the charge, she received an unexpected attack.

Three long tails of the mutant rat have crept towards Lyna's feet exploiting her

blind spot as she raised her shield, and wrapped around her ankle.

Just like that, Lyna was pulled by the tails and knocked down, then two tails started whipping her body.

"Al! Don't stop attacking! [][] 《Bow Skill – Arrow Stitching》 !"

I drew my longbow to the limit and shot an arrow, but the mutant rat avoided that and jumped at restrained Lyna at the same time.

"Get away from Lyn-chaaaan!!"

Al continued to fire a barrage of flame bullets at the mutant rat, but the mutant rat bit into Lyna's neck and protruded her forward to use her as a shield.

When Lyna's HP was depleted, a flame bullet landed on the mutant rat's back and damaged him.

Then, the rat slowly turned around from Lyna and towards us.

Until now Lyna was standing in the mutant rat's way as not to let him reach the rearguard, but now naturally the boss' target changed to us.

And then□□

"Oh come on, how many times am I supposed to die in one day, annoying. □□《Large Swing》!"

Lyna swiftly stood up behind the mutant rat's back and aiming for the base of the boss' tails she used the rotation-attack Art.

Having the three tails torn to pieces, the

mutant rat turned around towards Lyna who had a furious expression.

Lyna made a proud smile, but her composure ended with that.

"Hehen. Now you can't do the same th... whoops, wait, I still haven't healed myself up!"

I have given Lyna a【Revival Medicine】in case she happened to die, she used it and her HP recovered to 40% of her total HP.

With his tails chopped up and Lyna gathering mutant rat's hate once more, the boss swung his claws at her again.

"Lyn-chan! Keep his attention like that!"

"Wait, no way no can do! I mean, his attack power seems to be increasing!"

She let go of the short spear in a hurry and concentrated on defending herself with the leather shield.

Raising the leather shield she gulped down a potion, trying to endure somehow but the onslaught of attacking coming from the mutant rat was abnormal, Lyna was forced to harden her defence.

"Enemy has 30% HP remaining, huh. His characteristic is that the more his HP decreases the more his attack power increases, eh. Truly, a cornered rat will bite the cat, like they say."

"Yun-san this is no time to be impressed!"

With no time to rest, Lyna consumed the potions she had at hand.

While feeling it's quite unusual to see a player consume potions one after another like that, I winked to Al standing next to me.

"We can't go and allow the enemy's attack power increase, so let's beat him all at once."

"Understood. I'll go with maximum firepower."

Al and I selected the attacks we could use and unleashed them at the mutant rat who had 30% HP remaining.

"[][]《Flame Pillar》!"

At the same time Al poked the ground with the tip of his staff a pillar of flames rose up from the ground and rushed at the mutant rat who was turned with his back to us.

The mutant rat repeatedly attacking Lyna had turned around towards the pillar of fire that emitted a conspicuously strong light, but he reacted too late and his whole body was enveloped in flames.

"Al, that's dangerous!"

Receiving the blast flame with her shield, Lyna took distance from the mutant rat

who was in flames.

As for me, I aimed at the mutant rat's shadow in the flames and used the Art that I have restricted myself from using.

"[][]《Magic Bow Skill – Phantom Arrow》"

A faint red light condensed on the longbow, as I drew the string and accumulated power the intensity of the light increased, when the light had reached its maximum I released the arrow.

The red arrow flew straight and pierced the mutant rat struggling in flames, damaging him. But the damage didn't end with just that arrow, the red tail connecting the arrow and the longbow has split apart

and after changing into five magic arrows – assaulted the mutant rat.

The magic arrows approaching in a curve have damaged the boss one after another, and at the point four magic arrows pierced him, the mutant rat's HP has decreased down to zero. The last magic arrow had nowhere to go, so it hit the cave's wall behind the mutant rat.

Then, the body of the mutant rat had fallen dramatically to the floor of the cave, turned into particles of light along with the magic arrows that pierced him and disappeared.

"You two okay?"

"In the middle of the fight I received【Paralysis】and【Curse】and couldn't move or even use defensive Arts so I thought it's all over for me."

"Cheers for good work."

Smiling wryly I took out a potion and passed it to Lyna.

Meanwhile, coming from where the boss fell down Al approached us with a treasure chest.

"Yun-san, Lyn-chan, the boss dropped a treasure chest!"

"Extra reward, isn't it. But I don't have any strength left to rejoice."

"Well, there's no enemies left any more, let's check it after we're out on the surface."

As the twins nodded in response to my words, we left the cave and returned to the sewers.

From there, we aimed towards the surface. Thanks to going back and forth in search for the keys, we had grasped the sewers' structure and were able to proceed towards the surface through the shortest

route possible.

"Ohhh! You came back safely! So, a new species was born from the rats breeding in the sewer, huh?!"

When we returned to report the quest, the Quest NPC responded a bit exaggeratedly.

——You completed the quest——

【Rat Extermination】

Along with the message, each of us received 10kG and two Quest Chips.

"The reward is pretty weak. Just by using several 【Revival Medicines】 we're in the red."

"Lyn-chan, the one in the red is Yun-san,

not us."

"I don't really mind. It's something I did 'cause I wanted to."

"Yun-san, you're so handsome! Though you're a pretty girl!"

Lyna tried to joke in a good mood, but it only caused me some complex feelings.

"W-well, I might be in red after just the quest reward but we still haven't checked what's inside the treasure chest, right?"

"True. Maybe we'll have a comeback from what's inside!"

She opened the treasure chest with high expectations and checked what's inside.

"The item is... accessories, huh. A choker, a ring, and... ugh, how tasteless."

What Lyna took out were a leather choker with a pentagram tag on it, a silver

ring that increased magic stats and an accessory imitating rats' bones.

A bracelet reminiscent of a rib and a ring imitating a rats' skull were connected by a chain that was modelled after a spine, this accessory totally exhausted the meaning of "creepy".

I was bad with horror and creepy stuff, but I was interested in the accessory's stats.

Cornered Rat's Cursed Brace

【Accessory】

(Weight: 3)

ATK+4

MIND+4

Additional Effect:

Cornered Rat Attack

HP Recovery Disabled

Just like its appearance suggested, it was a cursed equipment. At the same time, it was unique equipment.

"Al? What do we do about this accessory?"

"Ugh, the design's horrible. Hmm, the effect doesn't look too bad, but I don't intend on rolling for such tasteless equipment."

Lyna's and Al's evaluation of it was that it was so-so, but to me it was cursed equipment I would like by all means – acquire.

The additional effect 【Cornered Rat Attack】 increased the attack power when you fell below a certain amount of HP. HP Recovery Disabled did only effect natural recovery and did not prevent healing with items and skills. Well, as long as one adjusts to the lack of natural HP recovery over time and doesn't go amiss, this accessory had no disadvantages.

"And Yun-san... hey, why are your eyes sparkling so much? You want it?"

"Honestly speaking, I really do."

When I said that, the two looked at me with surprise.

"This one is worth enough to compensate the usage of 【Revival Medicine】. Moreover, it's unique equipment."

My 【Substitute Gem's Ring】 and 【Faerie Ring】 also were equipment that had no durability, accessories that couldn't break or be destroyed was valued very highly.

An accessory I acquired as a prize from the 【Demonfolk Resort】's arena had similar effect and no disadvantage to it, but in exchange the percentage of attack increase was low compared to this 【Cornered Rat's Cursed Brace】.

"Then Yun-san should have it. I feel like I will be cursed as well if I equipped something this creepy."

"Also, Yun-san is the one who's in the red after this quest so she should receive it."

The two said so, so I received the【Cornered Rat's Cursed Brace】.

This time I acquired new Senses and a rare cursed equipment, it was quite fruitful adventure.

And in the end, I asked the two.

"So, how was the party this time? Was it any helpful as a reference for partying with that【Bow】Sense user?"

Hearing my words, the two nodded and[][]

""We're glad to have seen an unexpected side to Yun-san.""

"No, that's not what I'm asking about, heck, just forget about that."

The twins laughed seeing me make a sour expression.

Despite the fact they were split between boke and tsukkomi roles, only at times like these the two exerted such nonverbal understanding, making me appalled.

"It's just a joke. Well, since Yun-san's means of support were sealed it felt a little lacking, but I think I grasped the feel of it."

"Also, normally Yun-san matches how we play, but we now understood that to cooperate well, you need consult with each other and also need time."

The two made nice expressions and it seemed like they grasped onto something during this quest.

"I'd lie if I said I'm not anxious, but I

think we should meet that kid from Bersan's guild after all!"

"If we find something we would like to consult on, we will come again."

The two left after saying that, I've seen them off with a smile.

"I guess I needn't worry with how they are now."

I muttered to myself after they disappeared and started walking towards the【Atelier】.

Chapter 6

The Wyvern Mountains and the Unicorn

Just the other day, I finished party cooperation practice with Lyna and Al, then reported details of it to Letia and Emily-san through friend chat.

After returning to solo activities once again, I went through the item delivery-type quests I have been putting off.

The breakdown of quests I have completed by using items I took from the 【Atelier】 was——

【Potion Delivery (30)】

1 Quest Chip.

【High Potion Delivery (30)】

1 Quest Chip, 20kG.

【MP Potion Delivery (30)】
1 Quest Chip, 20kG.

【Bad Status Antidote Delivery (10 of each type)】
1 Quest Chip.

【Copper Ore Delivery (30)】
1 Quest Chip.

【Iron Ore Delivery (30)】
1 Quest Chip.

【Herb Delivery (30)】
1 Quest Chip.

【Medicinal Spirit Grass Delivery (30)】
1 Quest Chip.

【Magical Spirit Grass Delivery (30)】
1 Quest Chip.

【Arrow Delivery (1 set of 30)】
1 Quest Chip.

By doing item deliveries I was able to quickly earn 10 Quest Chips.

There still were delivery quests remaining for me to do, but when I did potion delivery quests their quest paper has turned yellow suggesting that the quests weren't completely done, so I decided to finish them first..

After that I took Ryui and Zakuro with me and headed to deliver the next set of items to the Quest NPC again, then returned to the quest board and took the next potion quest.

When I completed all potion delivery quest I was called out to by the NPC.

"I'm sorry to stop you, but are you the one who made these potions?"

"Yeah, that's right, why?"

Judging by the way things are, I could

roughly tell it was a conversation leading to a next quest.

"I'm in charge of this town's general store, you see, Obaba the Pharmacist who delivered us potions has fallen ill. That's why I'm buying potions from the outside to compensate for the potions she was delivering, but we're at our limit. If possible, could you go and see if you could do something about Obaba's state?"

"Understood. Where is she?"

"In the Eastern part of the town you go into a passage towards the north, there she has a pharmacy with a small garden. Please take care of it."

At the same time the Quest NPC finished speaking, I have received a new quest called【Cure the Pharmacist's Illness】.

The quests I did were easy to clear, but most likely to receive them you had to

possess a specific Sense□□in my case it was most likely the【Dosing Master】Sense.

If these quests are aimed at crafters, then Magi-san, Lyly and Cloude have most likely acquired them. No, some of the crafting quests' papers were coloured red so they must have completed them already.

While thinking about that, I headed towards the designated pharmacy together with Ryui and Zakuro. When I reached it, I found a building that looked more like a witch's house than a pharmacy.

It was an eerie store with the outer walls covered with ivy. The store sign was also nearly-covered with ivy as well, and on it there was a picture of a steaming cauldron used for Mixing, but it was discoloured due to age and rather than a pharmacist's symbol it was more like a kettle from hell.

"I-I guess it's here."

I stood in front of the pharmacy and slapped my cheeks, resolved myself and opened the door quietly but...

"Excuse me, is this the pharmacy? I've been asked to check on granny here."

"What is it? Coming with work? Can't do it now."

When I faced towards the source of the voice, I saw an old woman sitting in a chair.

The cranky-looking granny tried to stand up, but I approached her in a hurry and had her sit down in the chair again.

"What is it? You're unexpectedly sharp. I guess you're sent by the general store anyway. Sorry, I can't make any medicine with my body like this!"

"Granny, certainly I did come because I was asked to check on you by someone from the general store. Are you ill?"

Based on the quest's name, I guessed the old woman was suffering some kind of illness.

That's why I asked about that.

"My illness is one that causes my limbs to tremble. That's why it's dangerous for me to walk, I can't go outside either."

While saying so, she extended her hand and showed it to me.

"If it's trembling, then won't a【Paralysis Antidote Potion】heal it?"

"【Paralysis Antidote Potion】 can only alleviate symptoms, it has no effect on the root of the problem."

I grasped her wrinkled hand, but was unable to suppress the trembling and my hand also shook.

"If I make a mistake when mixing a medicine with my hands trembling, it will

turn into poison. That's why I'm not making any medicine. Go tell the guy from the general store this: if you don't want to make me a murderer, don't ask me for any more medicine."

"Actually, I can do【Mixing】as well, could I help somehow with curing your illness, granny?"

If the old woman's illness is healed, everything will be resolved. Hearing my words, the granny gripped my hand with her own trembling ones.

Although her hands were very dry, granny's touch was surprisingly gentle as she checked my palm.

"Hmph. That man from the general store seems to have sent me a quite capable person."

"Which means..."

"I'll have you gather materials and make a medicine to cure my illness."

With that said, the old woman conveyed the content of the quest to me.

"The three materials I specify will have to be gathered before nightfall. They're【Waterfowl Grass】, 【Swamp Lotus' Root】 and 【Crimson Slime Mould】. Also, material's freshness is very important. Make sure not to use the 【Portal】 or materials will go bad all at once!"

"Before nightfall?! And I can't use the portal?! There's no time!"

"If you have time to talk, you might as well go already!"

Along with receiving of the quest, I was chased out from the store.

Simple information on the three types of quest item materials was added to the quest

description.

After reading it I understood that they were in locations it was possible for me to get to on foot, although it would take some time.

"No helping it. Let's hurry up and finish this to make granny healthy. 《Enchant》 □□Speed!"

Emitting yellow light I ran towards the outside of the town.

While running I planned recovery of the quest items.

【Waterfowl Grass】 was in the back of the Second Town's forest, growing in a lake a little further than the location from where Lyly and I ran away.

Honestly speaking, I haven't gone that far before so I intended to go there while ignoring enemies, using my armour's

additional effect, 【Recognition Inhibition】 to its fullest.

Next one was 【Swamp Lotus' Root】, apparently clusters of it grew in a Western section of the Wetlands located South of the First Town. Since it was a place I approached several times while collecting materials it would most likely be easy to find.

The last one was the 【Red Slime Mould】, a type of a slime which seemed to be living in a mountain zone whose staple food was iron. Ahead of the Abandoned Village where the 【Revival Medicine】's material – Wisteria Peach Petals could be gathered, there was 【Wyvern Mountains】 in which the slime could be found.

Since the areas the quest items could be collected were all over, there was a need of collecting the items efficiently.

To start with, I aimed for the colony of

【Swamp Lotus' Root】 Wetlands in the South.

Ignoring attractive collection points I would normally never ignore, I headed to the colony of 【Swamp Lotus' Root】 and one-sidedly, using my bow from a long distance I wiped out 【Moor Frogs】 occupying it.

Then I entered the swamp, ignoring the fact I was soaking in mud up to my ankles I pulled out a 【Swamp Lotus' Root】 from it all at once.

"So this is 【Swamp Lotus' Root】... it does look like root of a real lotus root, maybe it can be eaten?"

Ryui and Zakuro were reluctant to enter the swamp so they stayed away, meanwhile I gathered 【Swamp Lotus' Roots】.

"Now, this much should be enough... whoops, I can't get out of here."

I'll end up losing time in here! Starting to feel impatient I somehow pulled out my leg out of the swamp and aimed for the edge of it one step at a time.

After I exited the swamp Ryui and Zakuro wouldn't approach me until the dirt disappeared with time.

Still, I didn't stop and wait for that happen, instead I headed to the Second Town while still dirty and wet with mud.

I continued to run while feeling an uncomfortable sensation of muddy water inside my boots, the dirt and moisture disappeared by the time I reached the Second Town. Then, I headed to the forest on the outskirts of the Second Town.

I ignored Fluff Clouds and other mobs and arrived at the lake, it had a considerably large size and there were multiple players gathered by it.

"Is there a different quest here as well...? But right now I don't have time to examine the details of that quest."

Although I could see the figures of players on boats fighting against something in the lake, I had to look for the【Waterfowl Grass】.

I looked around the lake by using【Sky Eyes'】 far-sightedness and located【Waterfowl Grass】on the shallow waters on the opposite side.

I was able to find the【Waterfowl Grass】that was my goal, but it was a hassle to dutifully circle around the lake to get it.

"It can't be helped, let's find some closer by."

After changing my Senses I ordered Ryui and Zakuro to wait, and I dived inside the lake.

It's pretty deep here. I hope there's some nearby.

The place I jumped in wasn't shallow waters, rather, it was quite deep in there.

And after looking around at the bottom of the lake, I found a bluish-white water plant that seemed to be the【Waterfowl Grass】.

Oh, even without going to the other side I can gather them.

I dove headlong to the bottom of the lake as I was and pulled out pale blue water plants that were growing there.

One wasn't enough, so I recovered several of【Waterfowl Grass】that sparsely grew around, when I did, 【Waterfowl Grass】has ceased to act as a quest target and changed into a normal object. With that, the gathering of the second material was complete.

It ended faster than it would if I had to go to the opposite side of the lake. With this I might have bought myself some extra time.

While majority of the quest was moving around, I was happy thinking that I gained some time, and looked up to the surface from the bottom of the lake.

When I looked up I saw the bottom of a ship that was on the surface, there was another player together with me in the water, who was engaged in fierce combat against a giant fish mob.

For just a moment my eyes met with his, and we both nodded lightly.

Then I emerged from the water making my appearance all at once.

The sound from above I heard muffled as I approached to the surface had turned loud all at once at the same time I emerged out of water.

The majority of voices has come from the players on to of several boats.

"Hey! Captain isn't coming back!"

"Don't give up! It's our captain! The man who challenged that huge fish all alone!

"B-but heyy. All thirteen members aside from Captain have already fled to the boats. It's over, impossible, the quest failed."

While players on the boats floating on the lake started giving up□□

"GOOOTT IIIIITT!!"

Raising up a harpoon from inside the water, the player showed everyone what seemed to be a drop from a giant fish, a giant tail fin.

The player I nodded to was their captain and apparently they splendidly defeated a boss with multiple parties participating, and managed to safely return to their

boats.

Seeing the captain alive and the boss subjugation complete, players on top of the boats have shouted to each other in the same manner as their captain.

I got up from the water and looked at the sight and once again, my eyes met with those of the player who beat the boss. This time he turned towards me and[][]

"GOTTT ITTTT!"

"G-gottt itt?"

My voice was a little low because I was embarrassed, but he still nodded contentedly and went back to his comrades.

"That must be... Shichifuku, right."

The player with short silver hair which looked damage by the ocean breeze who had goggles on his head and a harpoon in

his hand was the guild 【OSO's Fishermen's Union's】 guild master, Shichifuku.

Within his guild he wasn't called "guild master" but "captain", he was underwater combat specialist and Taku's acquaintance.

An originally hobby guild for people who want to do fishing on ordinary days, has gradually grew and become a guild specializing in underwater combat because of certain circumstances.

However 【OSO Fishermen's Union】 was a medium-sized guild and didn't have enough players to take on raid quests.

When I looked at them in more detail, I saw that some players on top of boats had equipment that didn't seem like something 【OSO Fishermen's Union】 members would use.

The fact they were together with another

guild meant that they received a raid quest together with other small and medium guilds.

I recalled how Letia spoke of small and medium guilds participating together in joint quests and muttered to myself.

Finished with what I had to do in the lake I left the forest in order to search for the last quest item, the【Red Slime Mould】, and headed down the main road extending from the Second Town.

And after advancing up to where the road split up, I stopped in front of a certain cave.

"Uugh, since I can't use portal I do have to pass through here after all."

The cave that was filled with the sound of screams whenever the wind passed through it[][]The【Horia Cave】.

The commonly known Horia Cave was a

location where mobs such as Skeletons and Spectres have emerged.

However, unless I passed through it I wouldn't be able to reach the Wyvern Mountains that had the 【Red Slime Moulds】.

"...Countermeasures are important. I won't fail a second time."

Holding 【Confusion Antidote Potions】 in each hand in case the Spectres put a 【Confusion】 bad status no me, I equipped myself with 【Spirit Tolerance】 and asked Ryui walking next to me, to immediately use 【Purification】 were my behaviour turn any strange.

"All right, let's go."

Although I raised an energetic voice, I entered the cave slowly – almost dragging myself inside.

Then after a walking for a while I heard the sound of bones clattering behind me[][]I took a look around and there I saw Skeletons springing up from behind and a Spectre slipping through a wall.

"Hiiihhh, this is impossible after all!"

At speed that should be impossible for someone this scared, I ran in a straight line through the cave.

In the middle of the cave skeleton hands extended to me from the walls causing me to scream, and then together with Ryui who was holding Zakuro we somehow managed to successfully run through the【Horia Cave】.

●

"Haa, haa... I'm really bad with passing

through there after all."

Sprinting at full speed I exited the cave and leaned on a disfunctional fountain inside the Abandoned Village to adjust my breathing.

I repeated taking a deep breath several times and looked up towards my next destination.

"So that's the Wyvern Mountains the【Red Slime Moulds】are in, huh."

I was looking towards a different road than the one leading up to the hill where the Wisteria Peach tree stood, one that lead to a mountain road.

The enemies appearing in that area were strong, large Wyvern-type mobs but they wouldn't appear unless you climbed on the mountain high enough. Also, the mountains were also filled with a number of natural caves.

"Well, according to the quest description even the entrances of the lower levels of the caves allowed for getting【Red Slime Moulds】."

I once again re-configured my Senses and then headed to the 【Wyvern Mountains】.

Although I passed by collection points with great reluctance as I looked for the 【Red Slime Moulds】...

"Can't find any. Do I have to climb up a bit higher?"

Thanks to the fact the large Wyvern mobs didn't appear in the lower parts I could move on without fighting, but I still couldn't find the item I looked for.

"There's none in the lower levels. Which means I have to look by the caves in the mountains."

I had no idea what's there inside the mountains themselves, but I couldn't do anything unless I searched them.

And I took a step inside one of the cave entrances present in the lower layers of the mountains.

"...I can feel someone's sight on me? Though I can't see anyone here, probably just my imagination."

For a moment I felt like my 【See-Through】 Sense reacted, but when I looked around I couldn't see any players.

Before long I forgot all about that and entered the cave.

【Wyvern Mountains'】 natural caves had a fantastical origin and were lit up by light-emitting ore, so they were just a little dim . Using 【See-Through】 Sense I carefully looked around for 【Red Slime Moulds】 but I could only find one mining point for

ore.

After walking inside the cave for a while, I noticed.

"...So it wasn't my just my imagination."

Faking my actions to look like I'm looking for quest items together with Ryui and Zakuro I quickly advanced towards the back of the cave.

"Let's run! Ryui!"

And matching the signal I hurried further inside to run away from the players chasing after me, but lurking in the passages ahead of me there were more than just one player and they all threw shuriken-like things at me.

Fortunately, I was the only one hit by the attacks and the damage wasn't too high either.

When the thrown weapons hit the mobs I

passed by, the attackers were targeted by them and beaten instead.

That method of protecting myself wasn't too pleasing to the guys who chased after me.

And then, ahead of where they led me to□□

"□□What is this place?"

The place I was led to was a large room. On the walls there were multiple holes with each having a passage in it, leading to them there was stair-like spiral-shaped scaffolding leading up to the top.

"It's where you meet your end."

Spoken to by a player, a young man standing in the centre of the room I directed my sight to him.

He had a smile that didn't make him seem to be a person who tricks others, but

it was horribly artificial.

Before I realized, the players who have been chasing after me also started gathering all at once through the countless holes in the room's walls.

"What the hell do you want from me, to lead me all this way?!"

I shouted emotionally while in my mind I devised a way to escape.

Surrounded by roughly thirty players I could rush into a gap between them, or try make an opening during a conversation.

"By what, I would say that we're going to PK you. That's all."

"Why in a place like this? And what for? There's isn't much for you in doing that."

The benefit you get from PKing other players in OSO was that half of the PK'd player's money is given to the PKer.

"Well. If I were to answer that question – we need money you see. That's why we PK people here, where strong players gather."

"Strong players gather here...?"

I answered with a question and stared intently in the young man's eyes, meanwhile other players around me set up their weapons which made it seem like the conversation will soon be over.

"This is the location for 【Wyvern Subjugation】 raid quest's boss fight. Multiple parties locate key items inside this cave to progress with the quest and call the boss here by using those items."

The young man, no, the PK player fell silent there, pulled out his own weapon – a long sword – and pointed the tip at me.

"Players from the raid party who split up would have been led here one by one and PK'd by our numbers. As expected, players

who take on raid quests are strong, but thanks to that we would get lots of money all at once!"

Intoxicated with his own plan, the PK grew more and more excited.

"I didn't think there would be a player silly enough to come inside where we are lying in wait. If you leave all the money you have on you, we'll let you go – how about it?"

The young man made an ugly smile as he proposed.

And my response to such a blatant lie was□□

"My answer is already decided. □□Not happening!"

"I see. Then□□"Then, what?"□□Huh?"

The moment I heard a surprising voice interrupt the young man, he himself, as

well as others who stood on his sides have been pierced from behind and fell forward.

And along with a distortion in the air, a single player made his appearance.

"Did you enjoy PK? It's fun, right! I love PK! Fighting strong players is exciting!"

"You... gh..."

"F-Flein?!"

The one who cut down the young PK from behind was PK guild's【Flame Prison Corps】guild master, the one called "the worst" PK – Flein. He pierced his thin sword into the fallen player's back and stepped on him.

The fallen PK's comrades couldn't get any closer because Flein was too close to him and could finish him off any time.

"I also love PK. I can indulge in fighting strong people all I want! I want to cut down

all strong people and those who are a nuisance to me. But you see, going about it without any principles would be troublesome. That's why I have, we have decided on making rules. [][]My rules of PK."

At the same time he pulled out the pierced sword from the young man he moved his leg away from him, then kicked him in the belly raising him upwards.

"First, for decent players you first obtain their consent and go at them from the front. Second, if you want to kill someone, no complaints if yourself get killed instead. And all people who cause trouble will be cut down by us."

The young man who was kicked away had slammed into the wall of the cave powerfully, the hit received was only possible for those who had PVP-limited Sense. After receiving damage from hitting

the wall, the PK fell down and collapsed.

Then, at the same time Flein showed a signal towards the holes in the walls, 【Flame Prison Corps】 member have appeared behind the PKs who were lying in wait and the location has quickly turned into a battlefield between PKs.

Seeing the battle between PKs unfold all of a sudden I felt like I was left behind by the flow of events and stood there dumbfounded, but having my clothes pulled by Ryui I returned to myself.

Realizing it was a good chance to escape I rushed in a straight line towards the nearby hole.

"Hey, wait!"

"Heey, that's quite something of you to look away from us at a time like this. ▯▯《Killing Edge》!"

"Guahh?!"

One of the PKs from the ambushers' side jumped out to stop me, but a single male player has slashed him from behind.

"So you're here as well, huh, Tobias!"

"Yo, been a while. How are you?"

The【Flame Prison Corps】guild's sub-master Tobias also made an appearance.

In the past I wouldn't ever think that Tobias, a PK who attacked me in the forest before, would save me.

Recalling what happened back then I did not thank him properly. When I stopped in place for a moment, a yellow light has appeared in the cave's room.

The source of light was inside hands of the young man Flein has kicked away.

Apparently he was using some kind of

item as the yellow light has rose up to the cave's ceiling.

"Ahahaha! Fools! I won't let you PK me! Even the PvP-specialized PK guild【Flame Prison Corps】can't beat a raid boss!"

"This guy, prepared to suicide he summoned the damn quest boss! It's coming, Flein!"

Wary of the ceiling which shined with yellow light, Tobias shouted to Flein.

Flein cut down another PK, then happily looking up to the ceiling he made a distorted smile.

"Nice! Not just PKs, but quest boss to beat too! To think we'd get two nice meals at once! Folks! Make sure that annoying lizard-wannabe doesn't eat our prey! And then we'll drag down that lizard-wannabe as well!"

Hearing about the raid boss I recalled that this boss required several parties to beat and my expression cramped up.

Ahead of where I looked up to, I saw an organism with a reptile body and bat-like claws, sticking down to the wall with its claws it looked down on us.

"A Wyvern, and a quest boss sub-species too."

The Wyvern I looked at with my【Sky Eyes】Sense was completely different from the ones appearing in the【Wyvern Mountains】, it was a raid-class quest boss.

Size-wise it was more than twice the size of a normal Wyvern, its nails and fangs were both longer and sharper, it's body was of grey-brown colour. Moreover, it had bloodshot eyes and saliva dripping from its mouth seemed to be like strong acid. It looked very ferocious.

"Heck, this is no time to be looking at him care-freely. I need to hurry and run□□Nwahhh?!"

I escaped to a nearby hole, but as to follow after me the Wyvern's sub-species has breathed fire at me.

"This is bad, real bad! Ryui, Zakuro! To the side passage!"

I escaped from the flame breath looming in to burn the inside of the cave and at the same time together with Ryui and Zakuro we jumped to a side passage, meanwhile Ryui made a simple barrier with a water shield.

The water shield was made momentarily and somehow held back the fire breath, but it could not stop such high firepower for long.

"□□【Clay Shield】!"

I took out a large number of Magic Gems from my inventory and activated them all at once to temporarily seal the entrance to the passage with a multiple of earthen walls.

Some of the flame breath has spouted from the gaps in the wall and the entire soil wall cracked, causing me to cover with cold sweat.

Thinking that it might be real dangerous at this rate, I proceeded to the back of the passage taking as much distance from the earthen wall as it was possible.

After several tens of seconds, flame has stopped coming from the gap in the earthen wall and the roar coming from the other side of the wall has stopped. A silence has come.

"...Is it over?"

Strength left me all at once and leaning

back on the wall I sat down.

The side street we jumped into fortunately allowed us to proceed further so it was not necessary to return through the passage the breath of fire ran through, but I was still anxious to walking blindly not knowing where the exit is.

"Haa, no choice but to go on. Ryui, Zakuro, what is it?"

Ryui and Zakuro who were snuggling up to my side had briskly walked deeper inside the side passage.

When I raised myself heavily and went over to them I saw Ryui try to move a large stone with his head and Zakuro tried to help by digging a hole below it with his front legs.

"Is there something in there? Leave it to me. 《Enchant》 [][]Attack."

I had Ryui and Zakuro move away, then stood in front of the large stone. And lifted the heavy-seeming stone with an attack enchant applied on me.

"One, two□□woah, so light?!"

As a result of vigorously lifting a stone that was lighter than I expected it to be I fell on my butt and dropped the stone on the ground by my feet.

"Oww, this is bad, the stone broke... hihh?! Disgusting!"

When I tried to turn the broken stone around, I ended up touching a red viscous fluid that oozed from it and pulled my fingers away momentarily.

That's when I received information from my reacting 【See-Through】 Sense and understood that it was the 【Red Slime Mould】 that I was looking for.

I didn't want to touch it, but I had to in order to acquire it. I touched it with my index finger before the red fluid coming from the cracked stone had escaped into the ground.

"Oh, I got it."

When I made sure the【Red Slime Mould】is on the list of quest items in my inventory, I saw an icon of a red fluid in a bottle. I actually took it out and somehow seemed to have a bottled version of【Red Slime Mould】.

There was no point in thinking when was it bottled, I only looked into a distance while thinking "this sure is a fantasy".

"Why do I find it now, of all times?"

If I were to find the【Red Slime Mould】before encountering the PKs I wouldn't have been involved in all the trouble, I thought and sighed.

"But I can't just give up in the middle of a quest. That granny's waiting, can't lose in here."

I slapped my cheeks once and stared towards the cave passage leading forward.

Let's hurry and proceed ahead, we need to aim for the exit.

From time to time when we heard a sound of sword strikes Ryui and Zakuro went ahead to scout thanks to which we advanced by avoiding people.

Otherwise, we proceeded while always taking the left passage in the wall. It was a more certain method than going by intuition.

Midway we encountered enemy mobs appearing in the cave so we either defeated them with surprise attack or passed by them, and then slowly proceeded onwards.

As time was ticking away, we proceeded aiming for the exit.

And then[][]

After continuously walking inside the cave's branches I returned to the cave's entrance.

As I looked from a slightly elevated location the light of the sun has began to sink in the West, since I walked inside a closed cave for a long time I was stunned by the sudden openness.

"...We're finally out, huh."

I muttered quietly and sighed. Ryui and Zakuro who were walking by my side up until this point have snuggled below me under my hands so I patted them

unconsciously. And Zakuro who was riding on top of Ryui had come up to my shoulder and started licking my cheek earnestly.

"W-what is it, Zakuro? Stop it, stop I said."

When I held Zakuro in both hands and raised him up to stop him from licking my cheek, he seemed to ask "feeling better?" so I hugged him to my chest, thinking he was really cute.

That moment[][]my line of sight lowered all at once.

"Huh? Why am I sitting down? Why am I so limp?"

I placed my left hand on my face and sighed grandly again, but I couldn't find any strength in my legs anyhow.

I was attacked by a group of PKs, witnessed a confusing battle between them

and【Flame Prison Corps'】, then barely escaped from a raid boss' attack just to wander inside【Wyvern Mountains】interior for a long time.

Relieved by the fact I was able to exit the cave I seemed to have had strings of tension cut.

Even though I had to deliver the quest item【Red Slime Mould】to the pharmacist granny, I couldn't force myself to move.

"[][]Looks like you properly came outta that cave."

That's when I heard a voice come from behind and turned around reflexively. There, on top of protruding rock above the cave, was Flein looking down on me.

"...Flein."

"Since you didn't come out for a long

time after escaping I thought you might've died and went back to town, but I see you're tenacious."

Hop, he lightly said and jumped down from on top of the entrance to land beside me.

"I didn't think that guy would call a boss right there. With that said, in the end we managed to hunt down all the PKers before he came and I myself cut down that delicious raid boss. I'm quite satisfied now."

"Flein, why were you there? There's no way that was a coincidence."

Seeing me glare at him and Ryui, who stood in front as if to protect me, Flein laughed.

"The reason they're PKing was[][]the guy said it himself right? Leave your money, that is."

"...What do you mean?"

While I made a puzzled expression, Flein happily spoiled the story.

"Right now in the First Town there's casino gambling. If you win, you get large amounts of Quest Chips. These PKs were gathering funds for that casino."

"Then... I was aimed at by them for such a thing, huh."

He said that with a wonderful smile, but hearing the truth I put my both hands on the ground appalled.

"They were indiscriminately assaulting normal players y'see. In order to continue PKing as per normal ourselves we have thoroughly hunted them down."

It seemed like Flein's mad dog's nature from back when there was no bounty system yet hasn't changed at all.

"When we were thinking on how to gather those PKs scattered all over the cave and beat them all at once, suddenly you went inside the cave out on your own and was led to that room allowing us to beat them in a single swoop, you have our thanks."

"I don't want to be thanked for such a thing though..."

I lowered my shoulders dejected, then looked up at Flein again.

"Heey, Flein-san! It's about time for us to withdraw!"

"Tobias' callin' huh. I'll be going to look for another prey. Go on and walk around all over, then bring us more of them! We'll eat them all up."

I don't want any more trouble coming to me! I protested in my mind but didn't speak it loud because I could imagine him

snort at me, so I just saw off Flein, Tobias and other members of 【Flame Prison Corps】 while sitting down.

Because it took extra time to escape from the cave, the day was coming to an end.

Finally able to stand up I went down the 【Wyvern Mountains】 and headed for the First Town.

However, the sun has set increasingly faster, faster than I could run with my speed enchant. After getting down from the mountains I stopped by the withered fountain.

"Haha, ahaha... In the end, the quest failed huh. What a shame."

I looked up at the reddish sky, although it was a game I felt a little frustrated after doing all this work quite seriously.

"I wonder if I made that pharmacist

granny expect a lot? Heck, she's just an NPC so I guess not."

I laughed at myself for the words I muttered.

I couldn't play smartly like Taku. I couldn't fight as cool as Myu. I couldn't deal with things as well as Sei-nee.

All I could do was not to give up, even when I'm doing stuff in unrefined and uncool way.

Like that I'm getting some lucky chance at victory, or get a helping hand from one of my acquaintances.

However, just this one time□□

"Haa, I don't want to give up but this time I can't do anything."

This time I couldn't make it no matter how fast I ran.

"Good grief, so laughable. No wonder I get a stupid nickname like【Nanny】when I look this pathetic."

I muttered mocking myself and sitting on the edge of the fountain I watched the sun fading beyond the mountains.

It was going so well up until the last part, I wasted a lot of time when I caught that PK bunch's eyes. Moreover I went all limp after exiting the cave and sat down, wasting even more time.

And after coming this far, I gave up.

"Haa, I'm so pathetic. Ah..."

The moment I muttered that, Zakuro escaped from my arms and□□water was poured on my head.

I raised my head to see what's happening, and saw Ryui headbutting me while snorting roughly.

"W-what are you..."

I wanted to ask him why did he do that, but he did not allow me as he poured more water over from over my head.

"H-hey, wait! Are you angry?! Why?!"

Another bucket of water was poured on me.

I smeared myself with mud, dived into a lake and by the end of the day I was soaked by Ryui.

While thinking that and raised my hanging-down wet hair to stare at Ryui, his appearance started to change.

Strong light was emitted from his body, so dazzling I couldn't keep my eyes open.

His barely-visible outline inside the light has gradually changed and when the light subsided, there stood adult Ryui with a splendid horn on his head.

The tamed mob has transitioned from 【Young Beast】 state to 【Adult Beast】 state. The ability limitation of 【Young Beast】 state has been released.

Due to the growth, you acquired EX Skills 【Young Beast Form】 and 【Adult Beast Form】. When the Adult Beast is using a Young Beast Form the cost of summoning is reduced in exchange for limitation on its abilities.

Receiving two pieces of information at the same time, I looked up at adult-form Ryui.

After growing into a splendid unicorn, Ryui rubbed his neck against my face the same way he did when he was a young beast.

Zakuro, shocked at the sudden change

had jumped towards my soaked chest.

"Hahaha... You grew at a timing like this, it's like a manga situation."

Then, adult Ryui matched my height and pointed at his own back with his head.

"Get on, you mean? Can we make it if you run at full speed? I already gave up on delivering the materials to pharmacist granny, but you sure are spartan."

Despite saying that, I fixed Zakuro in my arms and sat on Ryui's back.

There was no saddle nor stirrup. Not having any riding experience in the first place, I rode Ryui relying on memory of what I saw on TV.

Grabbing onto Ryui's neck I sandwiched his torso between my legs.

When I felt the smoothness of his mane that was unchanged even in adult form

Ryui rose up with his hind legs and my vision was raised all at once.

"This is a little scary."

With my mutter as a signal, Ryui started to run.

My body was suddenly pulled backwards and I felt the wind press on me making it feel more like I was on a suddenly-accelerating roller coaster rather than riding on a horse. Since he suddenly

started running in a hurry I strongly embraced Ryui's neck and sandwiched his body with my legs more strongly.

Although I couldn't afford to look at the surroundings, we left the Abandoned Village and were nearing the entrance to the【Horia Cave】.

"UWAaaaah!"

We charged into the cave full of undead mobs such as Skeletons and Spectres without decreasing our speed.

In addition to a mix of rodeo machine and a roller coaster the situation added horror elements in the background, with all that I could only scream pathetically.

"We're passing through there?! It's the shortest route, but there are ghosts there!"

As we passed by a Spectre had appeared by my side where I was looking towards

but disappeared shortly, then Skeletons stretched out their arms to us one after another but were all repelled. Meanwhile my screams did not stop.

"Ryui! Stop! STOP! Don't charge in there!"

Numerous Specters were blocking our way.

With no way to avoid Spectres as he was, Ryui further accelerated and heading towards them[][]he released【Purification】.

"...Ryui?'

Along with pure white the wall of Spectres in front of us had their figures turned into particles of light and blown away by the wind, opening the road for us.

Adult Ryui's abilities grew dramatically and he kept running while oozing with

pride.

As Skeleton stood up, they were blown away and hit different skeleton toppling them over, it looked like bowling.

And with speed higher than when he was charging enemy mobs Ryui rushed through the 【Horia Cave】 and then jumped out of the entrance.

"HAaa?! □□!!"

I felt like we were floating due to a large leap.

I clung to Ryui in order to bear the shock of landing.

And then he continued to run down the main road, passed right by the Second Town and headed towards the First Town.

Getting quite a bit used to straddling Ryui I raised my head and checked the sun's position, the sun was already fallen

behind the other side of the town.

"At this rate we won't make it for the quest. Any faster than this will be bad for my heart, but let's win in the very end! 《Enchant》 [][]Speed!

I further increased our speed with an enchant targeted on Ryui and the wind passing by my ear started to howl.

We passed by the Blade Lizard's side, jumped over Big Boar's large body and upon reaching the grasslands we trampled over small mobs such as Slimes and Herbivorous Animals.

Right before rushing into the First Town a haze enveloped our bodies.

At this rate we'll hit other people, I thought, but no one was even bothered by Ryui passing by at high speeds.

It was as if no one saw Ryui with me and

Zakuro riding on him... no, in fact he must have been using some kind of skill as he passed by people one after another like a ghost.

So these were Ryui's original abilities which were restrained by limitation until now, while I thought that, we passed by lots of people and finally arrived in front of the pharmacy.

Exhausted after clinging to Ryui all this time, I slipped down to the ground.

"Thanks, Ryui."

After horse-riding for the first time I tried to stand up with my trembling legs to pat Ryui, but instead I got nearly headbutted by his splendid horn.

He appeared to be saying "it's fine, just hurry and go", so I obediently headed to the pharmacy.

"...I gathered all... materials."

Despite staggering while I walk I moved in front of the old woman and held out the quest items to her.

"Hmph. You barely made it on time. But well, looks like you do have a spine. Well then, I'll have you make me a special medicine by using those materials."

Pulled by the pharmacist granny's trembling hand I was dragged into the workshop she had in the back of the store.

Then, I stood by the Granny's side and while listening to her say how to process the three kinds of materials, I made the medicine.

Gathering the materials was difficult, but making the medicine was somewhat easier than that.

The detailed methods of processing and

mixing were similar to those I used for【Mixing】and Cooking so I was able to make it well enough.

And finally, I placed the finished medicine in front of the pharmacist granny.

"Well done, considering it's your first time making it. I'll use it."

The Granny poured the still-warm liquid medicine, it seemed like it was quite bitter.

She closed her eyes and fell silent as if waiting for something.

When she did, her faintly trembling hand and shoulders have gradually stopped shaking.

"Looks like the medicine worked. Thanks to you I can still remain active as a pharmacist."

Making a grin on her wrinkled face, the

Granny made a smile that was more provocative than kind.

And she continued to speak.

"I'll pass my knowledge as a pharmacist to you, so come any time you want. Also, call me Obaba. All people close to me call me that."

Along with those words, the old woman, or rather, Obaba, has left the Mixing workshop and sat down in the chair by the store's counter. With that, the quest has been cleared.

——You completed the quest——

【Cure the Pharmacist's Illness】

The reward for clearing the quest, 4

Quest Chips and 50kG was on the higher side, but after being attacked by the PKs I felt this wasn't sufficient enough.

However, I didn't say anything about that as I left the pharmacy and□□

"...Ryui."

Seeing Ryui waiting in front of the pharmacy along with Zakuro who was no longer riding on Ryui's back I could finally make a relaxed smile.

"Thanks. I was able to clear the quest thanks to you and cure the pharmacist granny's illness. Thanks, really."

When I stroked scruff of Ryui's neck, he squinted comfortably.

Meanwhile, I received a new quest to learn new Mixing recipes from the pharmacy's granny, but for the time being I wanted to go back to the【Atelier】and

spend some laid back time with Ryui and Zakuro.

Epilogue

Quest Chips and Quest Completion Rate

After curing Obaba the Pharmacist's illness, in order to replenish my energy I spent the next day lazing around inside【Atelier】.

Right now, I sat on the stone floor that had a cold-resistance carpet laid on it and gave Ryui a lap pillow.

Ryui couldn't enter【Atelier】's store with his large adult body so I used the newly acquired EX Skill【Young Beast Form】 to return him to his previous appearance, when I did he came to me to get spoiled.

It seemed like Zakuro liked the warm carpet too as instead of holding a Heat Gel he lied beside me while waving his two tails in a good mood.

"Ryui turned adult, huh. Which means I have to prepare equipment and stuff to match that, I guess I need to talk with Magi-san and others about this."

I muttered while brushing Ryui whose head was on my lap.

The quest to learn new Mixing recipes from Pharmacist Obaba was still remaining.

But for now, I want to laze around——

"Onee-chan! Is it true that Ryui has turned adult?!"

——But it didn't seem like I could do that.

Opening【Atelier】's door with all her strength, ignoring the fact cold air was entering the store, Myu entered inside while leaving the door open.

"Myu. It's cold so close the door."

Also, come in more quietly. I wanted to complain further, but another figure has appeared from behind Myu.

"You're hurrying too much, Myu-chan. Haa, haa, Onee-san got tired out."

"So you were with Magi-san, that's an unusual combination."

After Myu rushed inside【Atelier】, the one who closed the door was Magi-san.

"AAAH! Yun-oneechan changed into winter clothes too! There's less exposure than before, but this is cute in its own right!"

Seeing me in winter clothes for the first time Myu raised her voice with surprise, still, being called "cute" by my little sister shocked me quite a bit.

"Oh right, Yun-oneechan was so cute that I forgot about Ryui! Ryui! Show me your

adult form!"

While saying so Myu moved around me to look into Ryui's eyes, but he immediately turned his head away in refusal. The sight made Magi-san and me smile wryly.

"Well, you can't force him if he doesn't want to."

"Uuu, but I wanted to see it."

Rebuked by Magi-san like that, Myu quietly moved away from Ryui. When I looked towards her with thanks, she returned me a bitter smile.

"Rather, where did you get that info? Ryui turned adult just yesterday you know?"

"There were witnesses! Yesterday people saw a big white horse suddenly disappear in the middle of gallop in the plains, and

then it reappeared in the town! All we need is to add Yun-oneechan beside the horse, and it all comes together!"

Ah, so that how Ryui's illusion looked like to others. Suddenly we disappearing and then appearing again sure would stand out. While I thought so, Ryui got up from my knees and hid himself with illusion.

"Well, since you two have come all this way I might as well treat you to some cake."

"Yayy! Cake! Caaake!"

"I guess. Then let's exchange information while we're at it."

I took out the strawberry cake and fruit roll cake Myu has previously given up on in bakery, and split them up.

"Wow, there are two types! And these are...!"

"The Christmas cake you gave up on.

Well, they aren't as good as those made by professionals though."

"I'm so happy! Then I'll eat both!"

When I poured tea, Myu immediately started to eat and compare both cakes.

"Here you go, Magi-san."

"I'll eat just the strawberry cake. In exchange, I'd like some cake for Rickle as well."

The young wolf Rickle got down from Magi-san's shoulder and lined up next to Zakuro, the two expecting to get cake.

"Understood. I'll prepare some."

I prepared dishes for Zakuro and Rickle, and then poured some tea for myself and exhaled.

"Now, for information exchange, what do we talk about?"

Magi-san said so. What should I start with? I wondered, meanwhile Myu drank some tea after eating the cake and cheerfully answered.

"How about we all say how many Quest Chips have we gotten and how did we get them? By th way, I have 41 of them."

Currently, a week has passed ever since the three weeks-long winter event has started. But she still collected so much, when I thought that with surprise, Myu looked at our reactions and made a triumphant expression.

"You got a lot, Myu. I got 25 chips."

"Ohh?! You work unexpectedly hard, Yun-kun. I took on requests from acquaintances to do cold resistance processing with their armour and did delivery-type quests, so I have 20 in total."

"Then you have finished 【Smithing】

quests already?"

"Yes, and what about you, Yun-kun?"

"I'm still in the middle of 【Mixing】 quests. Just earlier I had to clear a really troublesome quest involving gathering materials."

"Then you better proceed with them. I received various crafting recipes as a reward for my quests."

When I explained to Magi-san that when I finished a 【Mixing】 quest I received another quest at Obaba's pharmacy, she smiled merrily.

"Hee, so if you have a specific Sense you can get a quest corresponding to it. I finished all single quests on the quest board, but I didn't do any of the cumbersome chain and hidden quests."

"Then do you want the information I

gathered? I've got hints for hidden quests, but I can't take them on alone."

"Really?! Thank you!"

"Just for Magi-san?! No fair! Tell me too!"

"Good grief, it can't helped. Though they're crafting quests, unrelated to you, Myu."

When Myu finished swallowing a piece of cake, I told her about hints to hidden quest as well.

Since the quests I received were mainly delivery-type quests, I thought of leaving the hidden hints for subjugation quests to Myu and Magi-san.

"Speaking of which, I went to check on the quest board earlier and the current event quest completion rate was posted. Looks like roughly half of them were completed."

"That means we have two more weeks to raise the completion rate, huh."

"But won't that be quite difficult? As time progresses people will prioritize themselves and chip collection, won't they? Rather than take on quests they lack information on, they will be focusing on efficiently completing quests."

Magi-san spoke her concern regarding the event, but I wasn't that worried.

Among players there are verification maniacs and broken gamers such as Myu and Taku. Although it would go on sluggishly for the most part, the completion rate will slowly but surely increase.

Also, although they're inefficient, simple errand hidden quests are probably remaining.

I will take those while I do 【Mixing】

quests.

For the time being I'd like to set 50 Quest Chips as my goal, I thought. The winter quest event still continues.

—STATUS—

Name : Yun

Weapon : Black Maiden's Longbow

Secondary Weapons :
Magi-san's Kitchen Knife
Meat Cleaver – Heavy Black
Dismantling Kitchen Knife – Blue Dancer

Armour : CS No.6 Ochre Creator (summer and winter versions)

Accessory Equipment Limit 2/10

● Faerie Ring (1)

● Substitute Gem's Ring (1)

Possessed SP45

【Magic Bow Lv6】
【Sky Eyes Lv14】
【See-Through Lv24】
【Swiftness Lv20】
【Sorcery Lv18】
【Enchant Arts Lv41】
【Taming Lv21】
【Earth Element Talent Lv29】
【Dosing Master Lv3】
【Crafter's Knowledge Lv3】

Unequipped:

【Bow Lv50】
【Longbow Lv30】
【Alchemy Lv44】
【Synthesis Lv44】

【Engraving Lv25】
【Cook Lv15】
【Swimming Lv15】
【Linguistics Lv24】
【Climbing Lv21】
【Bodily Resistance Lv5】
【Spiritual Resistance Lv4】
【Physical Attack Increase Lv7】
【Pre-Emptive Knowledge Lv8】
【Vital Points Knowledge Lv8】

Current Questing Results:

● The winter quest event's completion rate——52%.

● The number of Quest Chips owned by Yun——25.

● Yun's current questing situation——in the middle of doing 【Mixing】-type quests.

Afterword

Hello to you, whom I meeting for the first time and you whom I meet again. I'm Aloha Zachou.

To those who took this book in their hands, O-san in charge of editing, A-san the vice-editor in charge as well as many others of you who have read my work that was previously published on the net – I am really grateful to you all. Currently OSO series has a side story called Silver Muse running in the Dragon Magazine, as well as a comicalization drawn by Hani Kuraun which is published in Dragon Age. In the manga you can watch Yun's and others' cute activities, in the side story you can read about Myu's cute and cool activities you won't see in the main volume. Please pick those up, by all means.

I thought of making "Film" the topic this time.

Personally, I'm not the type to go to the cinema, I mostly partake in watching films from BDs my father borrows indiscriminately. And mostly, they are either Hollywood disaster film or American comic hero ones.

When I was a kid I kept going "wow, amazing!" when I was watching film, but recently I've started paying attention to scene cut timings, use of CG technology, easy to understand dialogues and flags , and so on. I sometimes start thinking whether its an occupational disease.

And when I see disaster films' protagonist's co-workers, colleagues——intuitively I feel that "This guy will definitely have an unfortunate encounter". And that exactly happens in the film, either he's assaulted by a monster, falls into

trouble, or suffers a fatal wound in order to let protagonist escape. Though in some cases, they would survive.

In such case the healing thought of "Oh, the character who acts as series' conscience has survived" can be an unusual way to enjoy the film.

I'm thinking of borrowing another BD to watch the next time I feel like it.

Please take care of me, Aloha Zachou, from now on as well.

In the end, I would like to once again thank you who have taken this book in your hands.

I'm looking forward to the day I will see you again.

April 2016, Aloha Zachou